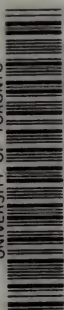
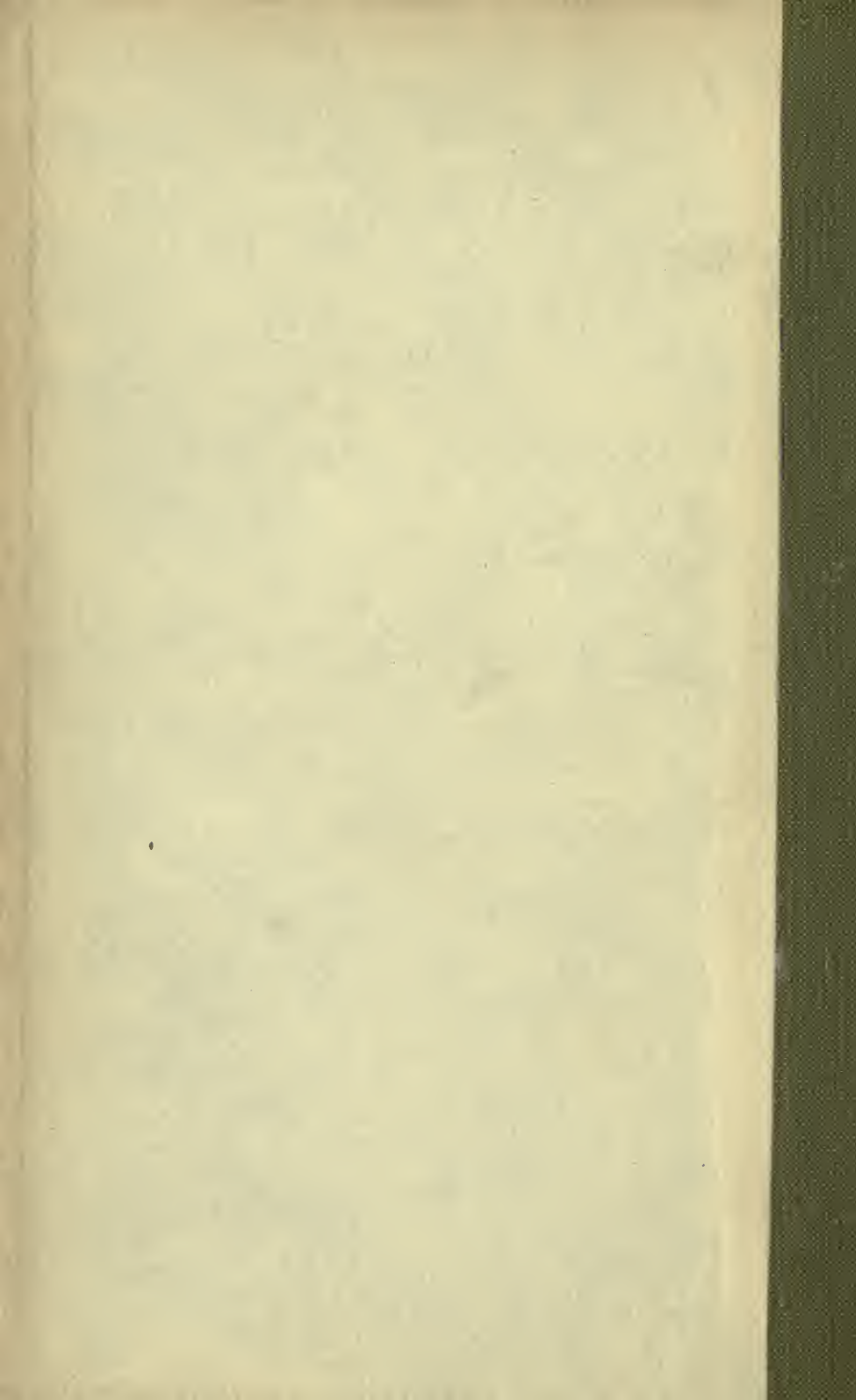


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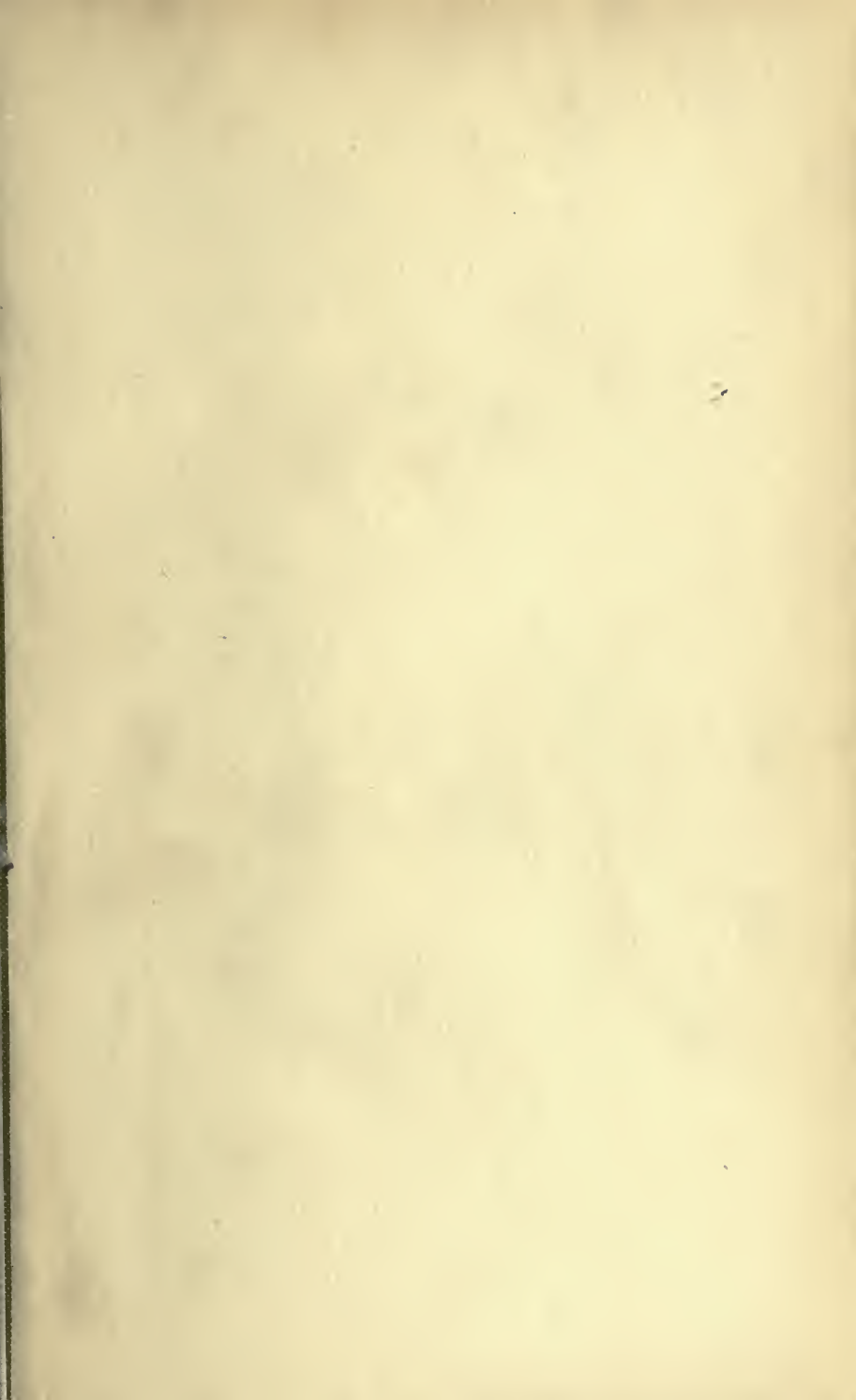


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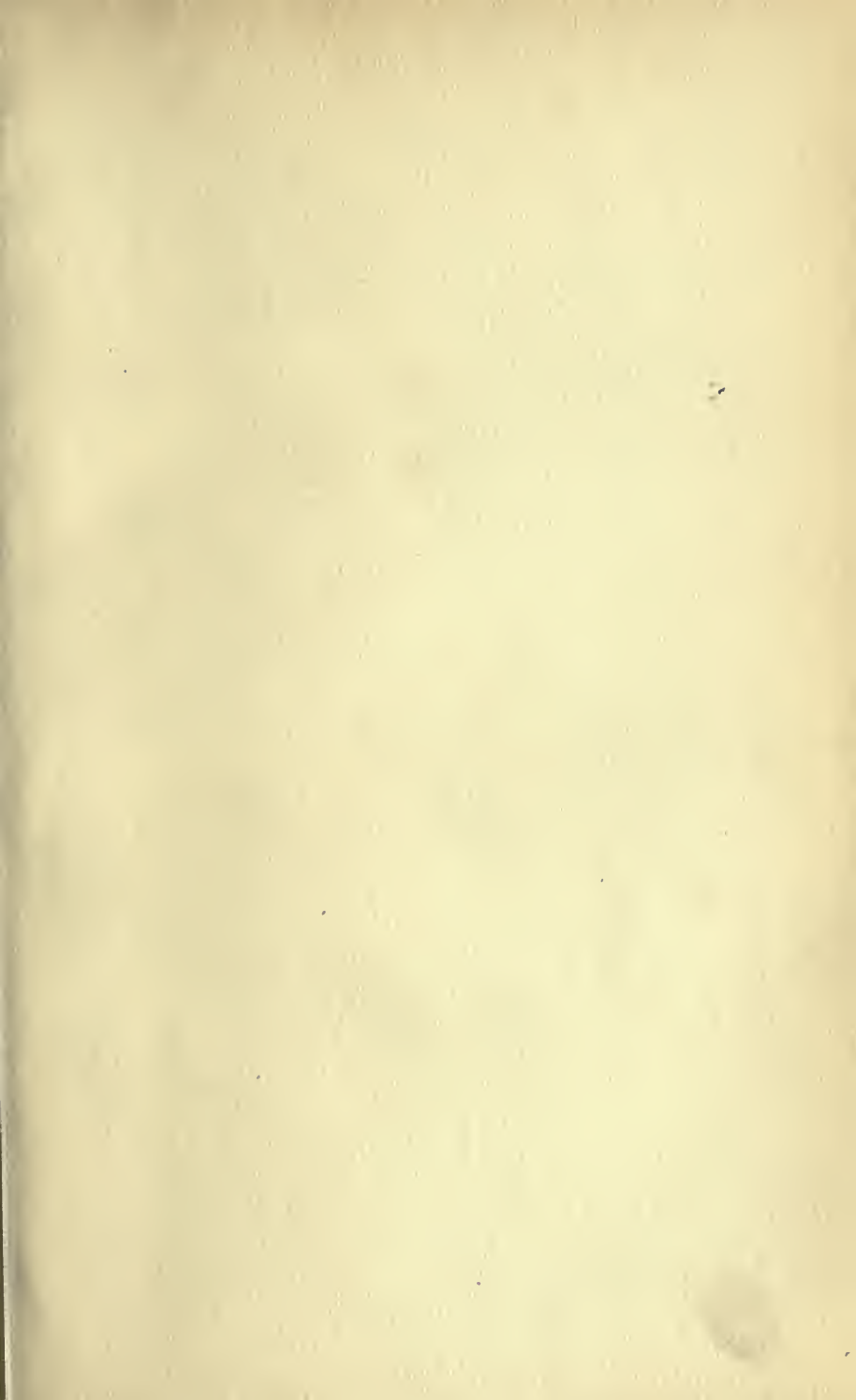




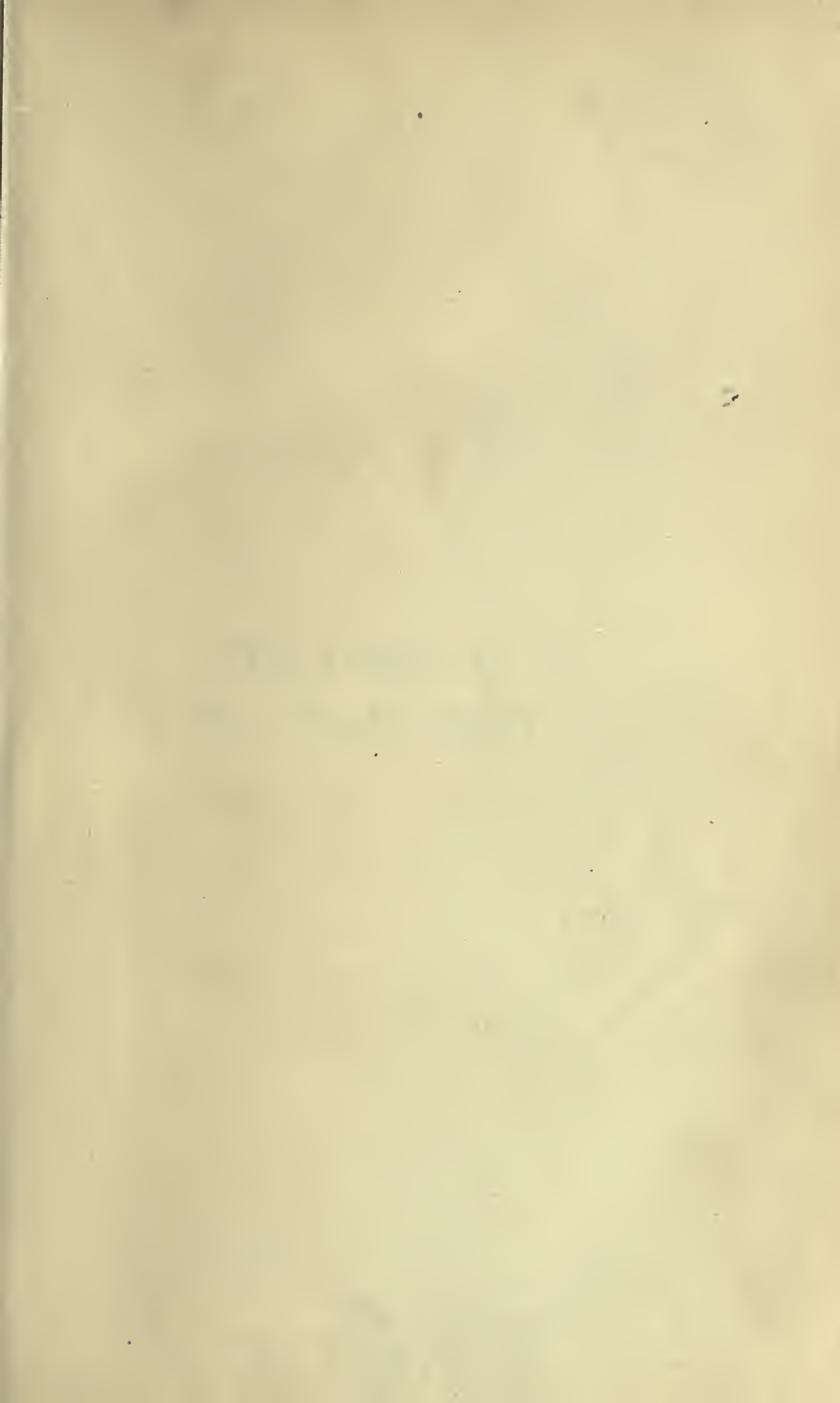




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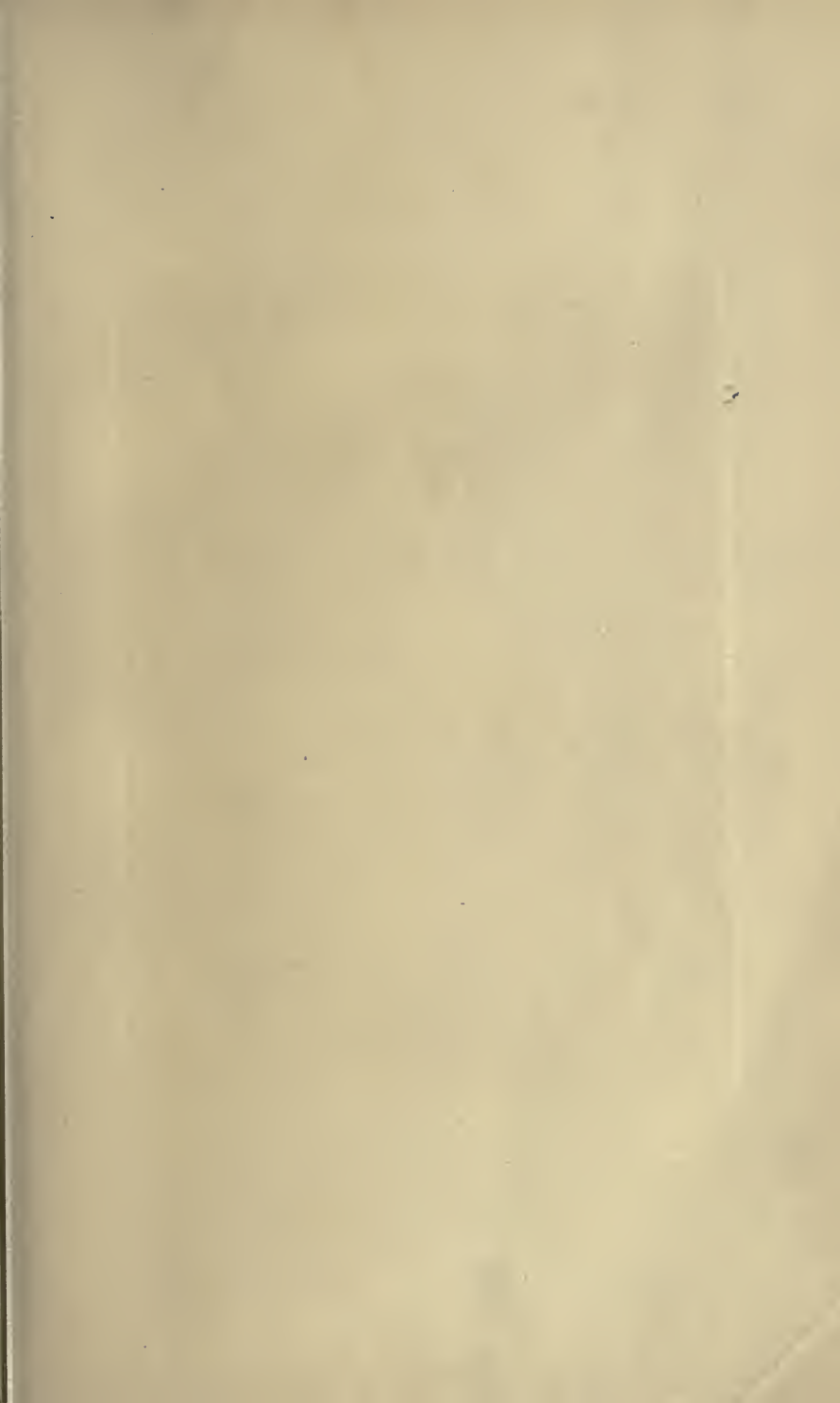






The Letters of  
Percy Bysshe Shelley







*Percy Bysshe Shelley.*  
*from a drawing by the Duc de Montpensier.*



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# The Letters

of

# Percy Bysshe Shelley

Collected and Edited  
By  
Roger Ingpen

With Illustrations

Vol. I

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## Preface

To Mary Shelley we owe both the first collected edition of Shelley's poems with her notes on the poet's life and work, as well as the first collection of Shelley's correspondence. The letters in her small but admirable collection, which was made public in 1840, at once established Shelley's right to be acknowledged as one of the great letter-writers of the nineteenth century. All the letters in Mrs. Shelley's selection were written from abroad, and it includes a greater portion of that splendid series of letters in which Shelley described his impressions of travel in Switzerland and Italy to Thomas Love Peacock. As far back as 1823, the year after Shelley's death, his "Letters from Italy" were announced to form a portion of the "Posthumous Poems," then preparing for publication. But the poems were issued in 1824 without the letters, as Shelley's father had forbidden the publication of anything of the nature of biography regarding his son under pain of stopping his allowance to Mary Shelley. She was, therefore, out of consideration for the welfare of her son, Percy Shelley, both forced to withhold her husband's letters from the world and deterred from writing his life. When at length (in 1839 and 1840) she was permitted to edit Shelley's poems and letters, the ban against publishing any biographical details was not withdrawn. And for that reason all those personal touches and allusions, which are the essential characteristics of familiar correspondence were eliminated from the first collection of Shelley's correspondence. Sir Timothy Shelley died in 1844. Mary Shelley survived him until 1851; she contributed, however, nothing more to Shelley literature. None the less hers remained for forty years the only available collection of the poet's letters, although, in the meantime, much of his

correspondence had appeared in various memoirs, such as Hogg's unfinished "Life of Shelley," Lady Shelley's "Shelley Memorials," Peacock's articles on Shelley, and Dr. Richard Garnett's "Relics of Shelley."

In the years 1876-1880, Mr. H. Buxton Forman issued his Library Edition of Shelley's Works in verse and prose, including a reprint of Mrs. Shelley's edition of her husband's correspondence with many additional letters; he was moreover enabled by collating some of them with the original manuscripts to restore a number of important passages which had been hitherto omitted. Two small but noteworthy selections have appeared since Mr. Buxton Forman's edition, both of which, however, partake more of the nature of anthologies than of collections of Shelley's correspondence; namely, the "Selected Letters" edited by the late Dr. Richard Garnett for the "Parchment Library" and the volume edited by Mr. Ernest Rhys for the "Camelot Classics": a useful collection of Shelley's Essays and Letters which has undoubtedly done much to make known to a large public the beauties of Shelley's prose. What Mr. Buxton Forman has done for the text of Shelley's published writings, Professor Dowden has done for the biography of the poet. Since the publication of his "Life of Shelley" in 1886, no one can pretend to write on the subject without having constant recourse to that work. Professor Dowden's scholarship, his ardent sympathy for Shelley, his insight and skill in disentangling the difficult knots in the poet's life, and the exceptional opportunities that he has had of studying the private papers in the hands of the Shelley family and of others, enabled his work easily to survive the criticism even of such writers as Matthew Arnold and Churton Collins, and have contributed to make it the greatest monument to Shelley's genius that has yet appeared, or, we may venture to think, that is likely to appear in our generation.

The task of preparing the present edition of Shelley's correspondence has been rendered practicable mainly

through the help of Professor Dowden, Mr. Thomas J. Wise, and Mr. H. Buxton Forman, C.B., to all of whom my debt is very heavy. Professor Dowden has not only permitted me to make use of a large number of important letters first printed in his "Life of Shelley," but he has also supplied me with copies of, and thus allowed me to print, many hitherto unpublished letters of the poet. He has, moreover, with unremitting kindness, given me his advice on innumerable points, and, without of course, incurring any responsibility for my mistakes, examined the proofs of a great portion of the work. In thanking him for his assistance, I must acknowledge the constant use that I have made of his "Life of Shelley."

Mr. Wise, who was one of the first to encourage me in my design to edit a collection of Shelley's correspondence, has not only most generously allowed me to reprint the letters to Elizabeth Hitchener, William Godwin, Jane Clairmont, and Leigh Hunt, from his privately printed volumes, but has also furnished me with copies of many unpublished letters. Mr. Buxton Forman has kindly permitted me to use those letters of Shelley which were reprinted from his collection in Professor Dowden's "Life of Shelley": he has also allowed me to print some letters, the publication of which is directly in his control, from other sources, and given me leave to use the text of Shelley's correspondence in his Library Edition. I have only used this text, however, when I have not been able to obtain access to the original letter, or when it contains variations from Mrs. Shelley's and other editions.

Mr. William Michael Rossetti may be regarded as the first systematic editor of Shelley's poetry. His "Memoir of Shelley" is packed with valuable criticism of the poet's life, and has for forty years remained an authority; I have to thank him for a most interesting note on Shelley's early friend, Edwin Graham. To Mr. Rossetti I further am indebted for the use of his chronology of Shelley's letters to Hogg, which, with one or two exceptions,



I have adopted; and for permission to reproduce the interesting drawing of a tree made by Shelley when at Eton, the hitherto unpublished sketch of the Protestant cemetery at Rome, and the portrait of Shelley's uncle, Captain Pilfold.

Mr. Bertram Dobell (who has made several important contributions to Shelley literature, including an edition of Shelley's letters to Elizabeth Hitchener) and Mr. V. Cameron Turnbull have both read through all the proofs of this book, and I have to thank them and Mr. Walter de la Mare for some very useful suggestions.

In addition to the above it is a privilege to express my obligations to Miss Alice L. Bird, by whose generosity the nation was enabled to acquire the manuscript of Keats's "Hyperion," for permission to reprint from the original letters of Shelley in her possession; to Mrs. Alfred Morrison for a like favour with regard to all the original Shelley letters (two of which are now printed for the first time) in her most valuable and most interesting collection; to Mr. Walter Leigh Hunt for the addition of two unpublished letters to Hogg; to Messrs. Kegan Paul, Trench & Co., Ltd., for confirming Professor Dowden's permission to reprint the Shelley letters from his "Life of Shelley," and for the use of a letter in Mr. Kegan Paul's "Life of William Godwin"; and to Mr. John Murray for the use of some of Shelley's letters from Mr. Prothero's edition of Byron's letters. I also gratefully acknowledge contributions of letters or suggestions from Mrs. Rossetti Angeli, Bodley's Librarian, Mr. William Brown, Dr. W. C. Coupland, Miss Greaves, Mr. John A. Hookham, Mr. E. Luthër Livingston, Mr. Ernest Dressel North, Mr. Thomas Seccombe, Mr. J. W. Williams, and Mr. John H. Wrenn. Although I have taken every precaution against the invasion of private rights, there may be some owners of letters to whom an apology is due.

I have attempted, whenever possible, to collate my text with the original letters; but in a great many cases this

has, unfortunately, not been practicable. I have, however, been able to make some important additions to the printed letters to Elizabeth Hitchener, and I have, in these letters, with very slight variations, followed Shelley's rather peculiar punctuation.

My single aim and intention in compiling these volumes was to gather together, in easy and convenient form, as large a number of Shelley's letters as present circumstances would permit. As far as the mere numerical object was concerned, I have been successful beyond my utmost hopes. In witness whereof I may be allowed to mention that the following pages contain a total, including a few fragments, of about 480 letters, that is to say, considerably more than three times as many as have appeared in any one previous collection. Of these, thirty-eight letters, so far as I am aware, have not been printed before, and upwards of fifty contain hitherto unpublished matter.

R. I.

*May, 1909.*



## Notes on Shelley's Correspondents

### WILLIAM THOMAS BAXTER

was a Dundee merchant, and the father of Mary Shelley's friend, Isobel Baxter, who afterwards became the wife of David Booth, a brewer of Newburg, Fifeshire. Booth was twenty-nine years his wife's senior, a stern Republican and an old friend of William Godwin, and when in 1809 his father-in-law visited London, he carried with him Booth's introduction to the Skinner Street philosopher. As a result of this visit, Mary Godwin spent a holiday at the Baxters' house in Scotland, where she became a very close friend of Isobel, the youngest of Baxter's five daughters. The two girls continued to correspond until July, 1814, when Mary Godwin eloped with Shelley; but the intimacy was renewed after her marriage to the poet in 1816. During the autumn of 1817 Baxter and Booth came to London with the intention of settling there, and Baxter paid a visit to the Shelleys at Marlow. In a letter to his daughter, Mrs. Booth, dated Oct. 3, 1817, he gives his impressions of the Marlow Hermit. "As to Shelley," he says, "I confess to you I was very much deceived by the preconceived estimate I had formed of him, and very agreeably disappointed in the man I found him to be. I had somehow or other imagined him to be an ignorant, silly, half-witted enthusiast, with intellect scarcely sufficient to keep him out of a madhouse, and morals that fitted him only for a brothel; how much then was I surprised and delighted to find him a being of rare genius and talent, of truly republican frugality and plainness of manners, and of a soundness of principle and delicacy of moral tact that might put to shame (if shame they had) many of his detractors, and with all this so amiable that you have only to be half an hour in his company to convince you that there is not an atom of malevolence in his whole composition. Is there any wonder that I should become attached to such a man, holding out the hand of kindness and friendship towards me? Certainly not." Baxter enclosed with this letter Shelley's proposal that Mrs. Booth should accompany him and Mary on a visit to Italy. This proposal so exasperated Mr. Booth that he not only insisted that the correspondence between his wife and Mary Shelley should be discontinued, but also prevailed upon Baxter to break off his intimacy with Shelley. He had hoped to do this by neglecting to answer Shelley's letter, but Shelley pressed for an explanation of his silence, and Baxter was at last compelled to offer some excuse for his neglect; Shelley's reply, printed on p. 578, apparently closed the correspondence. Previous to this rupture, in the winter of 1817, when Shelley was doing what he could to alleviate the sufferings of the poor at Great Marlow, it was to William Baxter that he applied for help in



procuring a supply of blankets and sheeting for distribution among his needy neighbours. Shelley evidently retained kindly feelings for Baxter, as he did not neglect to take leave of him (on March 3, 1818) before he left England for the last time.

#### BROOKES & Co.,

of Chancery Lane, Shelley's bankers. The chief interest of the purely business letters to this firm is that they furnish excellent specimens of the poet's autograph, as he invariably signed his name to them (as he did to few other of his correspondents) in full.

#### W. BRYANT,

a money-lender, with whom Shelley was in negotiation when he was attempting to raise money for Godwin in 1816-1818. Shelley, who describes him as "a Sussex man," says that Bryant wrote to ask him if he would sell a reversion on a small estate in that county (p. 457). Shelley addressed Bryant in one of his letters at Worth Rectory, which is some twelve miles from Field Place. Perhaps it is only a coincidence that Worth Hall was where Shelley's friend, Edward Graham, appears to have died in 1852.

#### GEORGE GORDON, SIXTH LORD BYRON (1788-1824)

Shelley appears to have first made the acquaintance of Byron's poetry while he and Hogg were living at Poland Street, in April, 1811. Hogg states that shortly after their expulsion from Oxford, Shelley bought a copy of "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers," one morning, "at a bookseller's in Oxford Street. He put it under his arm, and we walked into the country; when we were sufficiently removed from observation, he began to read it aloud. He read the whole poem aloud to me with fervid and exulting energy, and all the notes. He was greatly delighted with the bitter wrathful satire. . . . Notwithstanding his admiration of the poem, he did not express, as was his course whenever he was pleased with any work, a desire or determination to become personally acquainted with the author. He did not foresee that their lives would be blended and bound up together, as they were subsequently; still less did he anticipate that the irate satirist would be his executor, and as such, at the expiration of a few short years, would preside at obsequies, so strange, so mournful." Some years later, however, probably in 1813, Shelley sent a copy of "Queen Mab" to Byron with a letter. The poem reached Byron, who is said to have admired its opening lines, but he never received the letter. Shelley's earliest meeting with Byron was at Geneva on May 25, 1816. They made an excursion together round the Lake, and during the remainder of Shelley's stay in Switzerland, till August 18, the two poets were constantly in each other's society. Shelley returned to England with a MS. copy of the third canto of "Childe Harold," of which, with "The Prisoner of Chillon," Byron had entrusted him with the correction for the press. The outcome of this association was certainly beneficial to the author of "Childe Harold." Trelawny states that Godwin observed to him "that Shelley must have been of great



use to Byron, as from the commencement of their intimacy at Geneva, he could trace an entirely new vein of thought emanating from Shelley, which ran through Byron's subsequent works, and was so peculiar that it could not have arisen from any other source.' This was true. Byron was but superficial on points on which Shelley was most profound—and the latter's capacity for study, the depth of his thoughts as well as their boldness, and his superior scholarship, supplied the former with exactly what he wanted: and thus a portion of Shelley's aspirations were infused into Byron's mind. Ready as Shelley always was with his purse or person to assist others, his purse had a limit, but his mental wealth seemed to have none; for not only to Byron, but to anyone disposed to try his hand at literature, Shelley was ever ready to give any amount of mental labour." Byron's character probably first appeared in its true light to Shelley when in 1818 he began to correspond with him about the custody of Allegra. In the August of that year he visited Byron at Venice. They did not meet again until August, 1821, when Shelley went to see Byron at Ravenna and learnt of the Hoppner slander, for which Byron himself was primarily responsible. His treachery in suppressing the letter in which Mary Shelley had defended her husband against those villainous charges, incredible as it may appear, was established beyond doubt when it was found unopened among Byron's papers after his death. Yet Byron liked Shelley, and one of his reasons for settling at Pisa in 1822 was to be near him; but his presence in that town became unendurable to Shelley, who before long betook himself to Lerici. In the March of that year Byron wrote to Moore those memorable words about Shelley: "He is, to my knowledge, the *least* selfish and the mildest of men—a man who has made more sacrifices of his fortune and feelings for others than any I ever heard of." Byron was present with Trelawny and Leigh Hunt at the burning of Shelley's body at Via Reggio in August, 1822. Under Shelley's will Byron was named as one of two executors with a legacy of £2,000. The will was not however proved until twenty years after Byron's death, on the decease of Sir Timothy Shelley.

It has been suggested by Mr. Buxton Forman that Byron's familiar name "Albé," which frequently occurs in Shelley's correspondence, was formed from the initials L. B., for Lord Byron; while Prof. Dowden points out that it may be the short for "Albaneser," by which name Byron was known, probably after having sung, on one occasion, an Albanian song, for Shelley and Mary.

#### CLARA MARY JANE CLAIRMONT (1798-1879)

was born on April 27, 1798, the daughter of William Godwin's second wife by her former husband, who apparently died shortly after her birth. She was, says Professor Dowden, "a dark-haired, dark-eyed, olive-cheeked girl, quick to observe, to think, to feel; of brilliant talents; ardent, witty, wilful; a lover of music and poetry, and gifted with an exquisite voice for song," although, he adds, her sense of time was said by a competent authority to have been very defective. "In disposition she was romantic, yet with

a lively sense of reality, of untrained temper, making eager demands on life, with a capacity for sore fretting against the bars of fate ; pleasure-loving, at times indolent, yet able to undergo much irksome toil ; possessed of generous qualities, and of qualities dangerous to her own happiness and that of others." The name by which she was known in her family, Jane, was discarded by her for Clare or Claire, when, in 1814, she accompanied Shelley and Mary to Switzerland. It is said that her ability to speak French induced them to prevail upon her to join them. She was at that date turned sixteen, having, as she stated, just come home from a boarding school kept by a French lady where she had spent two and a half years. Mrs. Godwin followed the fugitives to Calais, but Claire refused to be persuaded to return with her mother. As Dr. Garnett points out, this ill-advised adventure "was the source of most of the calumnies directed against Shelley, to which subsequent events gave additional plausibility." In May, 1816, Shelley and Mary visited the Continent for a second time, and Claire went with them as before. At Geneva they met Byron, and, eager for romance, Claire seems to have forced herself upon him. The Shelleys were, however, as ignorant of this intrigue as they were of the fact that Claire and Byron had met previously in London when she was seeking an engagement as an actress at Drury Lane Theatre. On the Shelleys' return to England Claire continued to live with them, and in January, 1817, gave birth to a daughter at Bath, subsequently named Allegra, the reputed father was Byron, who agreed to be responsible for the care of the child. The Shelleys left England for the last time in March, 1818, and Claire once more became one of their party.

Although warned by Shelley against parting with Allegra, Claire consented to her being placed in Byron's care at Venice, but as he had refused to meet or correspond with Claire, the child was taken to him by a nurse in May, 1818, and the correspondence fell to Shelley's lot. In August Claire went to Venice in the company of Shelley, who prevailed upon Byron to let her have access to Allegra. After a short stay with her mother the child went back to Venice, and was subsequently taken by Byron to Ravenna. Here she became so unruly that his servants could not control her ; she was consequently placed in the care of some nuns in a convent at Bagnacavallo, her father paying double fees to ensure her being well cared for. In resigning Allegra to Byron, Claire practically had resigned all claim over the child, but when she heard that Allegra had gone to the convent, she held that the compact, to the effect that the child was always to remain in the care of one of her parents, had been broken. She therefore addressed some pathetic letters to Byron, and to an extent managed to involve Shelley in the correspondence. Byron was hard and callous ; the affair, however, was brought to an unhappy conclusion by the death of the child on April 19, 1822. Through Byron's spite Claire's name became linked with Shelley's in the vile Hoppner scandal. Claire's presence in the Shelleys' household was not on the whole successful, as she did not get on at all well with Mary,

and she subsequently accepted an engagement as governess at Florence in the family of Professor Bojti. After Shelley's death she continued to live on the Continent, and was in the situation of a governess in Russia. On the death of Sir Timothy Shelley she received a legacy under Shelley's will. Miss Clairmont subsequently resided in Paris, and in Florence, where she was remembered for her acts of charity, and where she died unmarried on March 19, 1879, having for some time previously been a Roman Catholic. From the specimens of her correspondence, printed in Prof. Dowden's "Life of Shelley," she seems to have been an excellent letter-writer. She kept a journal and made a translation of "Faust." She once wrote a novel for which she did not succeed in finding a publisher, and she subsequently expressed her intention of writing another showing the evils arising from irregular unions, as illustrated by the lives of Shelley and Byron.

AMELIA CURRAN (*d.* 1847)

was the daughter of the Irish statesman, John Philpot Curran, whom Shelley met at Dublin during his first visit to Ireland early in 1812. Miss Curran was living at that date in England, and Shelley first saw her at Godwin's house in the autumn of 1812. Describing this meeting to Miss Nugent, Harriet Shelley says (in her letter, Jan. 16, 1813) that what she saw of Miss Curran she "did not like. She said begging was a trade in Dublin. To tell you the truth, she is not half such an Irishwoman as myself, and that is why I did not feel disposed to like her. Besides she is a coquette, the most abominable thing in the world." Shelley's next meeting with Miss Curran was at Rome in April, 1819, where Mary and Claire recognised her while driving in the Borghese Gardens. The next day, says Prof. Dowden, "they left a card at Miss Curran's, and on Tuesday, April 27, had the pleasure of receiving at their lodgings their old acquaintance. Miss Curran had some skill at painting; Mary Shelley was a beginner in the art. Morning after morning the two friends spent together happily employed. When the day for leaving Rome arrived Miss Curran was at work on two portraits—one of Claire, who had given a couple of sittings, and one of Shelley begun upon that morning (May 7). This portrait, begun when Shelley was but lately recovered from a feverish illness, the hasty work of an imperfectly trained amateur, is that by which Shelley's face is most widely known." Mary Shelley did not like the portrait, and Miss Curran, when leaving Italy, thinking it worthless, was about to burn the picture with other lumber, but she happily rescued it just as the fire was scorching it. The picture was afterwards treasured by Mary Shelley, and was subsequently, on the death of Shelley's daughter-in-law, bequeathed to the nation. Miss Curran also painted portraits of William Shelley and Mary Shelley, was commissioned by Shelley to design a monument to William, and undertook to copy for him the so-called Guido portrait of Beatrice Cenci. Miss Curran lived as a recluse. She was not a professional artist, and did not exhibit at the public galleries: her life seems to have been uneventful. We get a glimpse, however, of her from a letter of Lady



Morgan, written from Rome on Feb. 4, 1820. "With great difficulty," she says, "I have at last got at Miss Curran; she leads the life of a hermit. She is full of talent and intellect, pleasant, interesting and original; and she paints like an artist." Miss Curran left Rome for a time: in 1822 she was in Paris, but she returned to Rome and fixed her residence there in 1840. She was received into the Roman Catholic Church by Cardinal Odescalchi, and died in Rome on August 30, 1847.

MR. DORVILLE

was Vice-Consul at Venice, during Hoppner's Consul-Generalship. He knew all about Allegra, and Byron, who was acquainted with him, pronounced Dorville a "good fellow."

EDWARD LAW, FIRST BARON ELLENBOROUGH (1750-1818), fourth son of Edward Law, Bishop of Carlisle, was born at Great Salkeld, Cumberland, and educated at Charterhouse and Peterhouse, Cambridge. He entered at Lincoln's Inn and on being called to the Bar, went the northern circuit. He took silk in 1787, and was retained as leading counsel for Warren Hastings at his trial in 1788, and opened the defence. He was made lord chief justice and Baron Ellenborough in 1802, which office he held till 1818, within two months of his death. Ellenborough was concerned with several cases that interested Shelley, although personally unacquainted with him. At the trial of Leigh and John Hunt in 1811 for the publication of a "seditious libel" in an *Examiner* article on military flogging, Ellenborough was on the bench, and although he urged the jury to return a verdict of "Guilty," the defendants were acquitted. In March, 1812, Ellenborough heard the case against Daniel Isaac Eaton, a bookseller, for blasphemous libel in publishing in a magazine the third part of Paine's "Age of Reason." Eaton was found guilty, and was sentenced to eighteen months' imprisonment at Newgate, during the first month of which he had to stand in the pillory for an hour in the Old Bailey. It was on this occasion (while he was living at Lynmouth) that Shelley addressed an indignant protest in his vigorous "Letter to Lord Ellenborough." The letter was printed at Barnstaple for private circulation, but nearly all the copies were destroyed by the printer. Lord Ellenborough was also the judge in the treasury prosecution of Leigh Hunt and his brother in December, 1812, for libel on the Prince Regent in the notorious article in the *Examiner* entitled "The Prince on St. Patrick's Day." The Hunts were found guilty and sentenced each to two years' imprisonment with a fine of £500. Shelley aptly described Ellenborough's address, in which he spoke of the Prince's infidelity to his wife as a "misfortune" which had overtaken him, as "so barefaced a piece of time-servingness that I am sure that his heart must have laughed at his lips as he pronounced it." The "Letter to Lord Ellenborough" was quoted as evidence against Shelley in the Chancery proceedings in 1817, in which he attempted to obtain the custody of his children. The pamphlet had, even at that early date, practically disappeared, for Shelley himself was unable to procure a copy.

## MARIA GISBORNE (1770-1836), JOHN GISBORNE

Maria Gisborne was the daughter of a Mr. James, an English merchant at Constantinople, who, leaving his wife and child in England in practically a state of destitution and penury, returned to the East. When Maria was about eight years old, her mother resolved to go in quest of her husband, and with this object in view sailed for Constantinople in the hope of obtaining some redress from him, but she was mortified that he would not receive her. Mr. James, however, was so delighted with his little girl, that he contrived to have her stolen and secreted until he had persuaded his wife, by the promise of an annuity, to return to England. Little Maria was then brought home and carefully educated, but while still a child in years, she was quite a little woman in appearance and manners, and entered the society of the European merchants and diplomatists at Constantinople. Having no one to look after her, she was left to herself and practically ran wild. When Maria was fifteen her father left Constantinople and took her with him to Rome. She had shown considerable talent for painting and music ; it was intended that she should be placed as a pupil with Angelica Kaufmann, and Barry, who had seen some of her work, urged her to take up art as a profession. Maria James, however, who had become a very beautiful and accomplished woman, attracted the admiration of and was married to Willey Reveley, a young English architect, then travelling on the Continent. Her father refused to recognise the marriage, and the young couple returned to England with means so restricted as to be little removed from actual poverty. Mr. Reveley became interested in politics, and identified himself enthusiastically with the Liberal side. He made the acquaintance among other politicians of William Godwin and Thomas Holcroft. Mrs. Shelley says that "there was a gentleness and yet a fervour in the minds both of Mrs. Reveley and Godwin that led to sympathy. He was ready to gratify her desire for knowledge, and she drank eagerly of the philosophy which he offered. It was a pure but warm friendship, which might have grown into another feeling had they been differently situated." On the death of Mary Woolstonecraft Godwin in giving birth to a girl, who afterwards became Mrs. Shelley, Mrs. Reveley took charge of her infant, and when two years later she was left a widow, Godwin proposed marriage to her. She, however, declined to accept him, and married in 1800 John Gisborne, who had been engaged, but without success, as a merchant. In 1801 Mr. and Mrs. Gisborne with Henry Reveley, the son of her first marriage, left England for Rome. Mr. Gisborne devoted himself to the education of his step-son, and although possessed of considerable culture himself, Gisborne was, as Shelley says, "a man who knows I cannot tell how many languages, and has read almost all the books you can think of ; but all they contain seems to be to his mind what water is to a river. His liberal opinions are all the reflections of Mrs. Gisborne's, a very amiable, accomplished, and completely unprejudiced woman." Some years later, in 1815, Mr. Gisborne made another attempt to engage in trade at Leghorn, and hoped to obtain the vice-consulship for that place, but his



endeavours again met with failure. In May, 1818, when Shelley and Mary were at Leghorn, they met the Gisbornes. Mary Shelley describes Mrs. Gisborne at this time as "a lady of great accomplishments, and charming for her frank and affectionate nature. She had the most intense love of knowledge, a delicate and trembling sensibility, and preserved freshness of mind after a life of considerable adversity. As a favourite friend of my father we had sought her with eagerness, and the most open and cordial friendship was established between us." That Shelley had a high regard for Mrs. Gisborne is evident from many expressions of admiration for her good qualities in his correspondence. She assisted him in his Spanish studies, and he addressed to her the beautiful poetical letter from the Gisbornes' house at Leghorn, that had been lent to him during their temporary absence in England. Shelley's friendship with Mrs. Gisborne was only severed by his death, and Mary derived comfort in the days of her widowhood in corresponding with her "foster-mother." There was one break, however, in the friendship, a mere passing cloud, owing to an unfortunate misunderstanding arising over the steam-engine that Henry Reveley had undertaken to build for Shelley, and on this occasion the poet's fiery temper got the better of him. Shelley professed to put up with John Gisborne (whom he regarded as a stupid bore) solely for his wife's sake, and he did not hesitate to tell his friends what he thought of him, nor to make fun of Gisborne's impossible nose. He entrusted him, however, when he went to England, with the correction of his "Prometheus." Peacock, who knew Gisborne, considered that Shelley's estimate was unjust, and remarked, "I found Mr. Gisborne an agreeable and well-informed man."

#### WILLIAM GODWIN (1756-1836) ; MARY JANE GODWIN

When Shelley began to correspond with Godwin in the early days of 1812 he hailed him as the incarnate exponent of "Political Justice," whereas that work, like the days of storm and stress that produced it, was a thing of the past in the life of the philosopher. William Godwin, one of the thirteen children of John Godwin, a dissenting minister of Wisbech, Cambridgeshire, was born at that place on March 3rd, 1756. He received his schooling at Hindolveston, was with a tutor at Norwich, and after serving as an usher at his old school, he entered, in 1773, the Presbyterian College at Hoxton. For five years he was a minister at Ware, Stowmarket and Beaconsfield, during which time he became an Unitarian and republican, and by 1787 he was an atheist and was depending on literature for a living. His first important work, which brought him fame and procured him one thousand guineas, was published in 1793, and was entitled "An Enquiry Concerning Political Justice and its Influence on General Virtue and Happiness." Although he attacked most of the existing laws and customs of this country and was especially severe on marriage, he deprecated violence, and therefore escaped prosecution as his book made no appeal to the multitude. In the novel, "Things as they are, or the Adventures of Caleb Williams," 1794, Godwin's gifts as an imaginative artist

are seen to such advantage as to overpower entirely the philosophy which he intended to promulgate in that work. He was, however, ready to assist his friends Holcroft, Horne Tooke, and Thelwall when they were arraigned on a charge of high treason, and it was mainly owing to his able defence that they were acquitted. In 1797 Godwin married Mary Wollstonecraft, with whom he had lived for some months previously; his explanation for taking this step was that she expected to become a mother. Her death took place not long after in giving birth to a daughter, who afterwards became Shelley's second wife. In 1796 Godwin had published a collection of essays with the title "The Enquirer," and now he set himself to write the "Memoirs of Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin" and to edit her "Posthumous Works." Many years of hard work followed during which he produced a novel, "St. Leon," in 1799; "Antonio," a tragedy, 1800; a "Life of Chaucer," 1803; and another novel, "Fleetwood; or the New Man of Feeling," in 1804. On the death of his wife, Godwin had proposed marriage to Harriet Lee, and afterwards to Mrs. Reveley (Mrs. Gisborne), but he met with a refusal from both ladies. He married, however, in 1801, Mrs. Mary Jane Clairmont, a widow with two children, who lived as his next door neighbour and who is said to have once addressed the question to him from her balcony: "Is it possible that I behold the immortal Godwin?" About the year 1805 Godwin commenced business as a publisher and bookseller of scholastic and juvenile publications. He issued some school-books of his own composition under the pseudonym of Edward Baldwin, and among other works Lamb's "Tales from Shakespeare," his "Adventures of Ulysses," "Mrs. Leicester's School," and an English Grammar by William Hazlitt.

Mrs. Godwin undertook the management of the shop in Skinner Street, Snow Hill, and despite Godwin's habit of addressing her in his letters as "My dear love," it is very probable that he stood in awe of her. She had a violent temper, was habitually untruthful, and treated Fanny Imlay and Mary Godwin with great harshness. Even her own children, Claire and Charles Clairmont, found her unendurable and were forced to quit their home. No one whom she encountered was safe from her malicious tongue. Shelley, who was one of her chief victims, used to say that when he was obliged to dine with Mrs. Godwin he would "lean back in his chair and languish into hate."<sup>(1)</sup> She was also an aversion of Lamb, who described her as "the bad baby" and as a "very disgusting woman, and wears green spectacles."

On January 2, 1812, Shelley addressed his first letter to Godwin, who was at the time entirely unknown to him. The letter was answered, and a brisk correspondence ensued; but it was not until early in the October of that year, when Shelley came to London, that he met Godwin for the first time. A fortnight previously, however, it should be mentioned, Godwin had visited Lynmouth in the expectation of spending a holiday with the Shelleys, but he

(<sup>1</sup>) Dowden's "Shelley," Vol. II, p. 173.

was disappointed in finding that they had already departed from that place. Godwin's early intercourse with Shelley was marked by the kindly interest of a distinguished man of letters in the welfare of a young man of great ability and promise. Shelley, however, soon learnt that Godwin was hampered by very serious money difficulties, and in May, 1814, he made an attempt to assist him in raising funds to relieve him of his embarrassments. In August, 1814, Shelley's elopement with Mary resulted in an estrangement from Godwin, who had been accused of selling his daughter. Godwin did not disdain, however, to receive money from Shelley, although he returned a cheque with the demand that it should be made payable to another name than his own as he did not wish it to be known that Shelley was assisting him. Their correspondence at this time was entirely devoted to money affairs: Godwin's letters were studiously insolent, while Shelley's replies were courteous and forbearing. With Shelley's marriage to Mary in December, 1816, a reconciliation took place between him and Godwin. The acquaintance continued on more or less friendly terms until after Shelley had left England for Italy, but the correspondence seems at length to have practically ceased. Godwin's affairs in the meantime had reached an acute stage and Shelley once more hoped to assist him, but on examination, it became evident that nothing that he could do would avail to extricate Godwin from his debts, and he was forced in August, 1820, to refuse him any further aid. Godwin, whose hopes had been raised by Shelley's enquiries, complained in the bitterest language of his son-in-law's decision; yet he had received by this date between £4,000 and £5,000, which had cost Shelley four times that amount to raise.

Although much of Godwin's time was spent in dealing with his money difficulties, he never entirely neglected his literary work, and later books comprised "An Essay on Sepulchres," 1808; "Faulkner," a tragedy, 1807; a "Life of Edward and John Phillips, nephews of Milton," 1815; "Mandeville," a novel (reviewed by Shelley), 1817; "On Population," a criticism of Malthus, 1820; "History of the Commonwealth," 1824-1828; "Cloudesley," 1830; and "Thoughts on Man," 1834. In 1833 he received the sinecure post of Yeoman-Usher from Lord Grey, and he died the following year.

#### EDWARD FERGUS GRAHAM (? 1787-1852)

Of Edward Graham, Shelley's earliest regular correspondent, little seems to be known. In the *Gentleman's Magazine* for June, 1852, there is a notice of the death of an Edward Graham at Worth Hall, Sussex, at the age of sixty-five. If this actually relates to Shelley's friend, it would fix the year of his birth as 1787. Graham's father was in the Army, and says Hogg, who met him at Field Place, he made the tea, supported Mr. Timothy Shelley in his after-dinner conversation, and generally acted as his factotum. Young Graham, who showed a talent for music, was educated at the expense of Mr. Shelley, in whose house he grew up, and, according to the statement of a common friend of theirs quoted by Professor Dowden, he and



Bysshe "were like brothers." In the year 1810 Graham was living in London, and a pupil of Joseph Woelff, a well-known German musician of the day. There is a reference to Graham's musical gifts in an unpublished letter, recently sold by auction, dated from Field Place on April 22, probably in the year 1810, in which Shelley sent Graham a copy of his poem "St. Irvyne's Tower," with four more verses than are printed in his novel "St. Irvyne." It appears that Graham had expressed a desire "at Christmas" to try his powers of composition with some of Shelley's poetry, and in reminding him of this wish, Shelley gave his friend leave to set the lines to music if he thought it worth while. Young Graham made himself useful to his patron's son, who whenever he was in London seemed to have regarded Graham's rooms in Vine Street, Piccadilly, as his headquarters: "Direct me to Graham's" is a frequent request in Shelley's earlier letters, which likewise contain numerous commissions for his friend. Graham's name disappears from Shelley's correspondence about the middle of the year 1811. Perhaps his father's relations with Mr. Timothy Shelley prevented him from keeping up with Shelley. Mr. W. M. Rossetti, who has very kindly favoured me with some reminiscences of Graham during the last years of his life, says: "It may have been towards the spring of 1845, when I was fifteen years of age, that Mr. Edward Graham began calling on my father, Gabriele Rossetti, at our house, 50 Charlotte Street (now Hallam Street), Portland Place. After that he continued, for perhaps a year and a half, calling pretty frequently, more especially in the early afternoon of Sundays. He was a musician, and I suppose a teacher of music. I don't know what his specialty may have been, but fancy he had composed some airs. Mr. Graham was a remarkably fine, genial-looking man, well turned of fifty, I presume, when I saw him first: tending towards corpulence, with regular features, blue eyes, and an extremely fresh rosy complexion. His manner was agreeable and friendly. In conversation he did not show any particular ability or marked turn of character—rather the reverse. When first he came to our house he presented the appearance of a very healthy man, but later on he was subject to ill-health, and I fancy he may not have lived beyond the year 1850 or so.

"My father left Naples for Malta in 1821, and Malta for London in 1824. When Graham appeared in 1845 he greeted my father quite on the terms of an old and cordial acquaintance, and I think it likely that they may have first met in Malta, and little if at all in ensuing years. At any rate, it was Graham who gave my father notice of an event which occurred in Malta in 1846—the death of the Right Honble. John Hookham Frere, who had been, in the years 1821 to 1824, a most valuable and highly-prized friend to my father in Malta.

"Mr. Graham showed me two very early verse-compositions, addressed to himself, by Shelley—one of them, I think, remains still unpublished; and some remarks written by Coleridge, which I have quoted in my edition of that poet ('Moxon's Popular Poets'), and again in the volume named 'Lives of Famous Poets.' As I was

then already a very fervent admirer of Shelley. I must no doubt have asked Graham as to his reminiscences of the poet, but I cannot remember his having told me anything of a noticeable kind."

MR. HAYWARD

was an attorney, and William Godwin's legal adviser, whose name figures in Shelley's letters in 1815-6 when he was raising money for Godwin's benefit.

ELIZABETH HITCHENER (*b.* 1782 ?)

Elizabeth Hitchener's father is said to have been formerly a smuggler, who had changed his name from Yorke to that of Hitchener. He afterwards kept a public house in the neighbourhood of Hurstpierpoint, Sussex, where his daughter had a school. She owed little to her parents, and before she was ten, she was sent to the school of a Miss Adams, whose favourite pupil she became, and who treated her with the affection of a mother. Writing in 1812, Miss Hitchener spoke of her former schoolmistress as the mother of her soul, who had kept a school for thirty-seven years, "but having too much virtue for the age, she has ever been an object of persecution. She is still compelled to continue it, and I have long sighed to offer her an asylum. This was my principal motive for engaging in a school; but till I am independent of my parents I durst not." Shelley first met Miss Hitchener when on a visit to his uncle, Captain Pilfold, at Cuckfield, in June, 1811. Her school was not far distant from the captain's house, and she numbered among her pupils one of his daughters. Miss Hitchener's views were liberal, and she was quite ready to discuss the subjects of religious philosophy and philanthropy, which possessed for Shelley at that date so great a fascination. He was charmed with his new friend, whom he soon invested with all the virtues and attributes he most admired, and with characteristic enthusiasm he at once enlisted her among his correspondents. Miss Hitchener's letters soon become scarcely less ardent than Shelley's, and he realised that his marriage to Harriet Westbrook at the end of August, 1811, would cause her considerable surprise. She would have heard of the event from the Pilfolds, but some six weeks later he wrote her a letter explaining his reasons for taking that step. Shelley met Miss Hitchener again on his visit to Cuckfield in October, 1811, and she soon afterwards acknowledged Harriet as the "sister" and Shelley as "the brother" of her "soul." Harriet now having joined in the correspondence, it became even more intimate, and the necessity of finding a name for her presented a difficulty. "Miss Hitchener," they decided, was too formal, and they could not call her Eliza, as Miss Westbrook who was one of the family, possessed that name; so she suggested Portia (or Porcia), but this did not long meet with favour, and was afterwards changed for that of Bessy. Her correspondence with Shelley became at length the talk of Hurstpierpoint and the neighbourhood, and Mrs. Pilfold seems to have made mischief on hearing that her nephew and his wife were endeavouring to induce the village schoolmistress to give up her school and become one of their family. But

after some hesitation, Shelley's entreaties, supported by Harriet's, overcame Miss Hitchener's discretion, and she therefore took her fate into her own hands, closed her school, left Hurstpierpoint, paid a visit to the Godwins on her way through London, and arrived at Lynmouth about the middle of July, 1812. In a letter to Miss Nugent written from Lynmouth on August 4, Harriet says "Our friend, Miss Hitchener, is come to us. She is very busy writing for the good of mankind. She is very dark in complexion, with a quantity of black hair, she is taller than me or my sister, and as thin as it is possible to be . . . her age is 30, she looks like as if she was only 24, and her spirits are excellent, she laughs and talks all day long." She seems, therefore, at first to have made a favourable impression on the Shelleys, but the impression was not of long duration. In corresponding with Elizabeth Hitchener, Shelley had been addressing a creation more or less of his imagination, and when she came to live under his roof he soon became disillusioned: her popularity declined rapidly and she was removed from her pedestal among the wise, the disinterested, and the virtuous. The whole household were soon against her: Shelley doubted her republicanism and recoiled from her masculinity; Harriet believed that she was setting her cap at Shelley, and even Eliza Westbrook had conceived an aversion for the poor woman. At the end of August the Shelleys left Lynmouth for Tremadoc, Miss Hitchener accompanying them, but in the early days of October they had already enough of her society and were anxious to be quit of it. They brought her to London, and as she had been induced to give up her school and occupation, Shelley proposed to compensate her with an annuity of £100 a year. She took her departure from the Shelleys' household, probably on November 8, much to the relief of all concerned. A month later, on December 3, Shelley makes a last reference to Miss Hitchener in a letter to Hogg, as "the Brown Demon," and even in terms more objectionable. Miss Hitchener returned to Sussex where the "Newspaper Editor" in *Fraser's Magazine* "saw her at the house of her father, sitting alone with one of Shelley's works before her. Her fine black eye lighted up, her well-formed Roman countenance was full of animation, when I spoke of Shelley." Medwin speaks of her as "an *esprit fort*, *ceruleanly blue*," who "fancied herself a poetess. I only know one anecdote of her," he says, "which Shelley used to relate, laughing till the tears ran down his cheeks. She perpetrated an ode, proving that she was a great stickler for the rights of her sex, the first line of which ran thus:

" ' All, all are men—*women* and all! ' "

Miss Hitchener was the author of two books: "The Fireside Bagatelle: containing Enigmas of the chief Towns of England and Wales. London, 1818"; a copy of this little volume in my possession bears an inscription in the author's handwriting. Her second work, a poem in blank verse entitled "The Weald of Kent," appeared in 1822. Miss Hitchener, with her sister, conducted a school at Edmonton in after years, when she earned the esteem of her pupils. Later she married an officer in the Austrian army



and went abroad, but before leaving England she left her correspondence with Shelley in the hands of her solicitor, the late Mr. Slack. These papers, which were never applied for, were first examined and transcribed by Mr. W. M. Rossetti. Mr. D. F. MacCarthy made considerable use of the correspondence in his "Early Life of Shelley," but it remained for Mr. Thomas J. Wise to be the first to print the letters in a collected form for private circulation. The original correspondence was bequeathed to the British Museum by Mr. Slack's daughter. Mr. Bertram Dobell edited and published an excellent edition of the letters in 1908 with an introduction and notes, printing the text from the plates of Mr. Wise's impression. The letters have been collated with the originals for the present work, and some passages hitherto unprinted have been restored.

#### THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG (1792-1862)

The eldest son of the seven children of John Hogg, D.L. and barrister-at-law of Lincoln's Inn, was born at Norton, co. Durham, on May 24, 1792. He was sent to the Royal Grammar School at Durham, and in January, 1810, he went to University College, Oxford. At the beginning of Michaelmas term of that year, that is at the end of October, he happened "to sit next to a freshman at dinner. It was his first appearance in hall. His figure was slight and his aspect remarkably youthful, even at our table, where all were very young. He seemed thoughtful and absent. He ate little, and had no acquaintance with anyone." The freshman was Percy Bysshe Shelley, and Hogg was destined to become his most intimate friend, the biographer of his early years, and especially of his brief career at Oxford. Hogg claimed to have assisted Shelley with "The Posthumous Fragments of Margaret Nicholson," and also, with perhaps more justice, to have written a portion of the lost novel, "Leonora." In March, 1811, Shelley in circulating his anonymous pamphlet, "The Necessity of Atheism," brought himself under the notice of the heads of his college, who called upon him to affirm or deny its authorship. He declined to answer their questions, and Hogg, who was known to be his inseparable companion, was then summoned; he also refused to give any account of the pamphlet. The two friends were therefore peremptorily expelled the University, and they left Oxford at eight o'clock on the following day (March 26th) for London, and found some lodgings at Poland Street, Oxford Street. After spending a month together, Hogg left London for Ellesmere in Shropshire, for a short holiday, and then settled down to his legal training in a conveyancer's office at York. Shelley continued to correspond with Hogg with whom he endeavoured to arrange a match with his sister Elizabeth, notwithstanding that Hogg was unacquainted with her. On August 24th or 25th Shelley eloped with Harriet Westbrook to Edinburgh, where Hogg joined the young couple shortly afterwards, returning with them about the end of September or beginning of October to York. But on his arrival at that city, Shelley was obliged to hasten to London on business, and left his bride in the care of Hogg, who was tempted to make love to

her. Harriet seems to have sent for her sister Eliza to protect her from Hogg's attentions, and she made Shelley acquainted with his friend's treachery immediately on his return. An explanation followed, and Shelley, believing that Hogg was repentant, forgave him, but without taking leave of him, Shelley at once left for Keswick with Harriet and his sister-in-law. From the correspondence which afterwards ensued, Hogg attempted to justify himself to Shelley, who was not, however, deceived by his sophistry, and broke off all communication with him. When Shelley was in London at the beginning of November, 1812, he called on Hogg, a reconciliation took place between the two friends, and the intimacy, practically on the old footing, was resumed. Hogg was invited to Tanyrallt in the spring of 1813, but the visit was put off owing to the assault on Shelley at that place, and his departure for Ireland. It was arranged that Hogg should meet Shelley in Dublin, but on arriving in that city, he learnt that the poet had gone to Killarney and Hogg returned home without seeing him. Shelley was in London in April, 1813, and from that date until he left England for the last time in March, 1818, Hogg was constantly in his society, and he continued to correspond with him occasionally from Italy. Hogg entered the Middle Temple, was called to the bar in 1817, and for many years attended the Durham and Northumberland sessions and assizes, and obtained some practice. Although painstaking and clear-headed, he did not make a successful counsel: he was too reserved and lacked quickness and eloquence. In 1833 he became one of the Municipal Corporation Commissioners for England and Wales, and afterwards was for more than twenty years revising-barrister for Northumberland, Berwick, and the Northern boroughs. Hogg paid his addresses to Mrs. Williams in 1823 on her return to England after Edward Ellerker Williams had met his death with Shelley in the ill-fated *Don Juan*, and he consented to qualify himself for her hand by making a tour on the Continent. His travels were issued in 1827 with the title "Two Hundred and Nine Days of the Journal of a Traveller on the Continent," and in the meantime he was united to the lady of his choice. He became one of J. S. Mill's circle of admirers, and continued on terms of intimacy with Hunt, Peacock, Coulson, and others of Shelley's friends. Hogg was a distinguished linguist: his knowledge of Greek was profound, and he was thoroughly versed in French, German, Spanish, and Italian.

It is as the biographer of Shelley that Hogg claims remembrance. In the *New Monthly Magazine* for 1832 and 1833 he contributed a series of articles describing Shelley's life at Oxford. These papers, which were revised somewhat drastically, though probably improved by the editor of that magazine, Edward Lytton-Bulwer, were acknowledged by Mary Shelley and Shelley's friends generally as presenting a most faithful picture of the poet; and it was naturally supposed that Hogg would make an excellent biographer of his friend. About the year 1855 the Shelley family commissioned him to write Shelley's life, and entrusted him for that purpose with a mass of correspondence and documents. On the

appearance in 1858 of the first two volumes of the work, it was received with unqualified disapprobation by the family, who withdrew the materials from his hands, and no more volumes were issued and apparently the book was never completed. Hogg's book, which, to say the least of it, is an unconventional biography, carries the life of Shelley down to the spring of 1814. It might be described with certain reservations as the confessions of Thomas Jefferson Hogg, with some recollections of his friend P.B.S. The book is an olla-podrida of random reminiscences and amusing anecdotes highly spiced with the cynical humour of a shrewd man of the world. Incomplete as the book is, it is destined to live.

Besides this unfinished life of Shelley, Hogg wrote a novel which was published in 1814 with the title of "The Memoirs of Prince Alexy Haimatoff," of which Shelley wrote a critique in the *Critical Review* for December, 1814. He contributed in 1822 an article on Apuleius to the *Liberal*, and in 1840 "Recollections of Childhood" to Bulwer's *Monthly Chronicle*, which was ridiculed by Thackeray, besides articles on Antiquities and Alphabets to the "Encyclopaedia Britannica." Mr. Walter Leigh Hunt, who tells me that he remembers meeting Hogg in old age, described him as a shy, reserved, and somewhat disappointed man, who passed his last days as a studious recluse.

THOMAS HOOKHAM, JUNR. (1787-1867),

the son of Thomas Hookham, of Huntingdonshire, who was born in 1739 or 1740. As a young man the elder Hookham travelled in Holland and Germany, and is said to have married a lady belonging to the family of the Earl of Barrymore. In the year 1764, having come into the possession of a considerable sum of money, he founded the circulating library which bore his name for over a hundred years at Old Bond Street, although it is said to have been established at some other place. Besides the library, Hookham opened about the year 1794, a suite of reading-rooms which he dignified with the name of the Literary Assembly, under the patronage of the Prince of Wales and the Royal Dukes, where subscribers had access to an extensive reference library as well as to the English and foreign periodicals. In the meantime he had associated himself with the publishing firm in New Bond Street known as Hookham & Carpenter, the chief business of which was the issuing of works of fiction and memoirs of the circulating library order, the most noteworthy being "The Romance of the Forest," "The Sicilian Romance," and "The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne" of Mrs. Radcliffe. Hookham died at Lower Tooting in 1819 in his eightieth year. In 1811, when the younger Thomas Hookham was about twenty-five—a little man of about five feet high,—he and his brother, Edward T. Hookham, were publishing books on their own account at their father's library, 15 Old Bond Street, for in that year they issued the Chevalier Lawrence's Utopian romance, "The Empire of the Nairs, or the Rights of Women;" in 1812 their names appeared on the title-pages of the second edition of Peacock's poems, "The Genius of the Thames," and "The Philosophy of Melancholy," and in 1813



T. Hookham issued Hogg's romance, "Memoirs of Prince Alexy Haimatoff," of which Shelley wrote a review. Shelley possibly made Hookham's acquaintance through Peacock whom he may have met in 1812 on one of his walking tours in Wales. From Shelley's earliest letter to Hookham (July 29, 1812), which appears to have been preserved, it is evident that it was preceded by others that have not survived; but in Hookham he had found a young man much after his own heart, who although brought up as a member of the Church of England, is said, like his brother, to have become an Unitarian with leanings towards freethought and republicanism. The correspondence was continued on friendly lines, and it was to Hookham that Shelley applied for a loan after the assault at Tanyrallt. In March, 1813, Shelley sent Hookham from Dublin the MS. of "Queen Mab," saying that he desired it to be printed and published immediately. The poem was issued as "printed by P. B. Shelley" (with the address of 23 Chapel Street, Grosvenor Square, the house of Mr. Westbrook), on the title-page. Shelley's name also appears at the end of the volume. Neither Hookham's name nor that of the actual printer occurs in the book. The late Mr. Edward Hookham, a nephew of Thomas Hookham, stated that "Queen Mab" was responsible for Shelley's quarrel with Hookham. He is said to have destroyed all the copies of the "Letter to Lord Ellenborough" that Shelley had sent him, except the one copy that he retained for his own use. We do not know whether he was successful in satisfying Shelley with the wisdom of this holocaust, but a coolness between the poet and Hookham was evident after the former came to London in April, 1813. By that time "Queen Mab" was in the printer's hands, and when Shelley delivered the notes for the poem, it is not unlikely that his publisher, alarmed at their unmeasured frankness, had declined to be connected with the book. Shelley's association, however, with the Bond Street publisher was not entirely discontinued. Hookham espoused the cause of Harriet Shelley, and it is to his honour that he endeavoured to befriend her after her separation from her husband. Whether rightly or wrongly, Shelley imputed to him some of the causes of his misery and poverty in London during the winter of 1814. Hookham, however, bore Shelley's anger with good grace and made considerable efforts to assist him out of his difficulties. At a later date he acted as a mediator between Shelley and Harriet during her last days, and it fell to his unhappy lot to acquaint Shelley with the fact of her death. At the beginning of May, 1816, Shelley left England for a tour in Switzerland, but before the date of his return (about the 9th of September) Thomas Hookham had started on a walking tour in Switzerland. In December, 1817, Hookham, in conjunction with the Olliers, published the Shelleys' "History of a Six Weeks' Tour through a part of Switzerland, Germany, and Holland," and on February 1st, 1818, he published his own travels anonymously in a foolscap octavo volume of 242 pages with the title "A Walk Through Switzerland, in September, 1816, 'Long, long be my heart with such memories filled!' London: Printed for T. Hookham, jun., Old Bond Street, and Baldwin, Cradock and Joy, Paternoster Row,

1818." The book is well written and evidently the work of a cultivated and well-read man, and, like Shelley's, is in the form of letters, but beyond that point it bears little resemblance to the "History of a Six Weeks' Tour," as he traversed only a small portion of the ground covered by Shelley. Lausanne, however, suggests the usual reference to Gibbon, and Lake Geneva inspires him with thoughts of Rousseau. With the publication of Shelley's book his association with Hookham came to an end. He presented him with a copy of "Laon and Cythna," and continued, even when living in Italy, to subscribe to the Library in Old Bond Street, but he probably did not correspond. In later life Thomas Hookham became acquainted with Sir Percy and Lady Shelley, who acquired the letters that Shelley had addressed to him, and the rare pamphlets that he had received from the poet's hands; he also assisted them in forming their collection of Shelley letters. Hookham died in 1867, like his father, in his eightieth year, and the Library, formed shortly afterwards into a limited liability company, has since disappeared.

#### MRS. HOOPER

Mrs. Hooper was Shelley's landlady at Lynmouth in whose house the poet lodged during the July and August of 1812, with his wife and her sister, Eliza Westbrook. Here Miss Hitchener came in the middle of July. On September 19, after the Shelleys had left Lynmouth for three weeks, Godwin arrived, and called on Mrs. Hooper. In a letter to his wife he expressed himself as delighted with her; "She is a good creature," he said, "and quite loved the Shelleys. They lived here nine weeks and three days. They went away in a great hurry, in debt to her and two more. They gave her a draft upon the Honourable Mr. Lawless, brother to Lord Cloncurry, and they borrowed of her twenty-nine shillings, besides £3 that she got for them from a neighbour, all of which they faithfully returned when they got to Ilfracombe, the people not choosing to change a bank-note which had been cut in half for safety in sending it by the post. But the best news is that the woman says they will be in London in a fortnight." Mrs. Hooper's house has been pulled down and another erected on its site. Its position was pointed out to the late Miss Mathilde Blind, by a daughter of Mrs. Hooper, a Mrs. Blackmore, then eighty-one, who retained a vivid recollection of Shelley. These particulars are noted in Prof. Dowden's "Life of Shelley."

#### DR. HUME (1781-1857)

John Robert Hume was born at Renfrewshire and received his medical education at Glasgow and Edinburgh. He had been Wellington's physician in the Peninsula, and he continued to act as the Duke's medical adviser in England, which office he also held for the Duke of Cambridge. He was an M.D. of St. Andrew's, 1816, L.R.C.P. 1819, a Commissioner of Lunacy in 1836, and an inspector-general of hospitals. When Chancery decided that Shelley was not to have the custody of his two children by Harriet, Ianthe and Charles Bysshe, his proposal in 1818 that Dr. and

Mrs. Hume should act as their guardians was approved by the Master in Chancery. Dr. Hume agreed to bring the children up according to the principles of the Church of England, and in attending to their religious education he undertook that they should be furnished with no books that would be likely to shake their faith in any of the great points of the established religion, and among their books expurgated editions of Shakespeare, Pope, and Hume's "History of England" were especially named. The boy was to be placed at the age of seven in a good private school—whence he was to pass to a public school and afterwards to one of the Universities. The girl was to be educated at home by Mrs. Hume, if necessary with the assistance of suitable masters. The fee for the education of the children was fixed at £200 a year, £120 of which was to be paid by Shelley and the remaining £80 was to be derived from Mr. Westbrook's £2,000 4 per cent. securities. Charles Bysshe Shelley did not survive his father many years: he died at the age of twelve in 1826. Ianthe Eliza, who afterwards became Mrs. Esdaile, died in 1876.

JAMES HENRY LEIGH HUNT (1784-1859); MARIANNE HUNT was a son of the Rev. Isaac Hunt, of Barbados, born at Southgate, Middlesex, and educated from the age of seven to fifteen at Christ Hospital (1791-1799). As a boy he amused himself by writing verses, and a collection of these was published in 1801 by subscription under the title "Juvenilia." Three years later Hunt began life as a journalist by contributing to *The Traveller*, and in 1808 he became editor, and his brother, John Hunt, publisher, of the *Examiner*, which was conducted on an independent policy, but with advanced liberal and humanitarian views. On February 24, 1811 an article appeared in the paper on military floggings, and a Government prosecution followed; but the Hunt brothers were acquitted. Shelley was at Oxford at the time and he addressed a letter to Leigh Hunt to congratulate him on the result of his case. Hunt, however, was soon in trouble again. On March 22, 1812, an article appeared in the *Examiner* from his pen entitled "The Prince on St. Patrick's Day," in which the Prince was mercilessly taken to task, and described as "a corpulent gentleman of fifty." Leigh Hunt and his brother were again put on trial, but on this occasion they lost their case and were sentenced to two years' imprisonment with a fine of £500 each. Shelley proposed that Hookham should start a subscription for the Hunts, and he put his name down for £20. He must have also written direct to Hunt, who says in his "Autobiography" that the imprisonment brought him acquainted with Shelley, "I had seen little of him before, but he wrote to me making me a princely offer, which at the time I stood in no need of." Leigh Hunt's first meetings with Shelley were restricted to a "few short visits which did not produce intimacy." Thornton Hunt, in a note to his father's "Autobiography," from which the above is quoted, says that Mr. Rowland Hunter "first brought Leigh Hunt and his most valued friend personally together. Shelley had brought a manuscript poem which proved by no means suited to the



publishing house in St. Paul's Churchyard, but Mr. Hunter sent the young reformer to seek the counsel of Leigh Hunt." In the spring of 1816 Leigh Hunt moved to Hampstead, where Shelley visited him in December. In the same month Hunt contributed an article to the *Examiner* on "Young Poets," dealing with the work of Shelley, John Hamilton Reynolds, and John Keats. On the day after Shelley's return to Bath from his visit to Hunt he learnt of the suicide of Harriet Shelley, and he at once returned to London to claim his children. Leigh Hunt's sympathy at this time did much to sustain Shelley "against the weight and horror" of the event, and the anxiety of the Chancery proceedings that followed it. Henceforth Shelley counted Leigh Hunt among his most valued friends and correspondents, and they were frequently at each others' houses. Shelley was always ready to aid with his purse or his advice, and Hunt never lost an opportunity to defend his friend when assailed, as he too often was, by the press. Shelley's last day in London, Tuesday, March 10, 1818, was spent at his lodgings in the company of Leigh Hunt and his wife. In his correspondence with Hunt from abroad the affectionate side of Shelley's character is seen at its best, and in that beautiful letter dedicating "The Cenci" to Hunt, he pays the highest possible tribute to his sterling qualities as a friend. Hunt at this time was much bothered with money matters; he had a large family to provide for and some domestic troubles, and although he was most industrious, he failed to make any headway. It was suggested to Shelley by Byron that Hunt should be asked to come to Italy and found the quarterly review, which was afterwards known as *The Liberal*, Byron was to provide the funds and pay Hunt's expenses. It was not suggested, however, that he should depend entirely on the review for his support. Shelley had often expressed a wish that Hunt should join him in Italy, and Hunt was only too glad of this opportunity to do so. But he made the fatal mistake of throwing up the editorship of the *Examiner* and of bringing his entire family with him, consisting of his wife and seven children. He set sail for Italy in November, 1821, and the boat after being tossed about in the channel, went into Plymouth. Here the Hunts settled down for the winter, and started again in the following spring and arrived at Leghorn on July 1st, 1822. Shelley went to meet his friend, and after seeing him and his family comfortably settled in the apartments provided for them by Byron in his palace, he set out for Lerici on his last voyage.

Hunt was present at the cremation of Shelley's body, of which ceremony he has left a vivid description in his "Autobiography"; he also wrote the Latin inscription for Shelley's tomb. Having lost his friend, it was now necessary for Hunt to treat with Byron direct regarding the *Liberal*, but things did not go smoothly. Byron did not get on with him, the review failed, and was discontinued with the fourth number. Hunt was now stranded in a foreign country without any regular means of support, and practically without friends. He managed to make a meagre living by writing articles for English periodicals, and he returned to England in 1825. Three

years later his "Lord Byron and some of his Contemporaries" was published and it raised a storm of indignation from all of Byron's admirers, and their name was legion. The book was written while Hunt was still smarting from the treatment that he had received from Byron, and he lived to regret it. But it contains much that is interesting besides the portion devoted to Byron. Hunt gives some particulars of his own life which afterwards formed the basis of his "Autobiography"; also recollections of Shelley, Keats, Lamb, and other of his contemporaries, besides some letters of Shelley and Trelawny's account of his cremation. Leigh Hunt's life henceforth was almost entirely devoted to work. He possessed but little capacity for business, but his misfortunes were not, as has been so often represented, entirely of his own making. He was a painstaking, industrious worker, whose modest wants were few and easily supplied. Mrs. Leigh Hunt's health had been very bad, and in the year 1822 her life was despaired of. She survived, however, for many years, until 1857; and it is painful to add that she proved a source of the greatest unhappiness to her husband. It has only recently been made public (by Mr. H. W. Nevinson in the *Nation* for May 22, 1909) that Mrs Leigh Hunt was totally incapable of managing her house, and that the secret of Hunt's borrowing proclivities is explained by her intemperate habits.

One of Mary Shelley's first acts, on the death of Sir Timothy in 1844, was to carry out Shelley's intention of settling £120 a year on Leigh Hunt.

#### FANNY IMLAY (1794-1816)

was born in Paris, the daughter of Mary Wollstonecraft and Gilbert Imlay, with whom she lived as his wife for some time (chiefly in Paris during the Terror), and to whom she addressed those pathetic letters which were given to the world by William Godwin after her death. Fanny's birth, and many references to her babyhood are detailed in these letters. In 1795 Mary Wollstonecraft went to Sweden and Norway on business as Imlay's accredited agent, and she took her child with her, but shortly after her return to England she found herself deserted by Imlay. Some months of misery followed and then Mary renewed her acquaintance with William Godwin and married him in 1797, but she died five months later. Fanny Imlay was henceforth known as Fanny Godwin, and was brought up with her half-sister, Mary, in the Godwin household. In 1801 Godwin married Mrs. Clairmont, a formidable step-mother, who besides being an accomplished liar, possessed an ungovernable temper and a malicious tongue. Happiness was out of the question in the house of such a woman, but after Mary Godwin, accompanied by Mrs. Godwin's daughter, Claire Clairmont, eloped with Shelley in 1814, Fanny's life became unendurable. It was rendered even more miserable later when Mrs. Godwin declared that Shelley and Fanny were in love with one another. There is every reason to suppose that the girl was attracted to Shelley, as most women were, and her letters show that she was keenly interested in everything concerning him, but it is unlikely that Shelley entertained anything

except a brotherly regard for her. It is said that Fanny did not know her own history until she was grown up, and that she was much upset when it was disclosed to her. Forbidden to associate with Mary or Shelley, and unequal to support alone the vagaries of Mrs. Godwin's temper, she left home one autumn day in 1816, with the apparent intention of visiting an aunt in Ireland, and proceeding to Swansea in loneliness and despair, she ended her short and unhappy life by a self-administered dose of laudanum.

#### JOHN KEATS (1795-1821)

The name of Keats was associated with that of Shelley in Leigh Hunt's *Examiner* article on "Young Poets" of December 1st, 1816. Henceforth, until Shelley left England for ever in March, 1818, he and Leigh Hunt were frequently together, and probably the two young poets met at Hunt's house. Keats's name occurs in the extracts from Mary Shelley's diary for February, 1817, printed by Professor Dowden in his "Life of Shelley," either as a visitor to the Shelleys at their London lodgings, or as Leigh Hunt's guest at Hampstead; but he had declined an invitation to Marlow, as he feared that Shelley's influence might hamper the development of his powers. Keats's first volume of poems appeared in 1817, and Mr. Dix states, in his "Pen and Ink Sketches," that Shelley interested himself in its production. This statement is not, however, borne out by Keats's remark in his letter to Shelley when he says, "I remember you advising me not to publish my first blights on Hampstead Heath." On February 4, 1818, Shelley, Keats, and Leigh Hunt each wrote a sonnet in friendly rivalry on the River Nile. From Mary Shelley's diary it would appear that Shelley met Keats a few days later, probably for the last time, at Hunt's house on February 11, 1818. Besides the letter to Keats printed in this collection, Shelley wrote to him when he heard of his arrival in Italy (see p. 856). Lord Houghton says in his "Life and Letters of Keats," "He had received a most kind letter from Mr. Shelley, anxiously inquiring about his health, offering him advice as to the adaptation of diet to the climate, and concluding with an urgent invitation to Pisa, where he could assure him every comfort and attention. But for one circumstance, it is unfortunate that this offer was not accepted, as it might have spared at least some annoyance to the sufferer, and much painful responsibility, extreme anxiety, and unrelieved distress to his friend." Keats died at Rome on Feb. 23, 1821. Shelley, who did not care for Keats's earlier poetry, and confessed that he read "Endymion" with difficulty, praised some passages in that poem, and was loud in his admiration of "Hyperion": it is strange, however, that he spoke but slightly of the other poems in Keats's last volume. Leigh Hunt's own copy of this book, which was found in the pocket of Shelley's jacket, turned back as if he had been reading it when the boat was overcome by the sudden squall that wrecked it, was burnt with Shelley's body. It is mainly then to Shelley's admiration for "Hyperion," that we owe the "Adonais," his elegy on the death of the younger poet.



## SIR JAMES HENRY LAWRENCE (1773-1840)

was the son of Richard James Lawrence of Fairfield, Jamaica. He received his education at Eton and in Germany. One of his earlier works was a poem published in 1791 entitled "The Bosom Friend." Two years later he produced an essay on the Nair Caste in Malaber, regarding marriage and inheritance, which essay was inserted by Wieland in his *Merkur*. The subject evidently fascinated Lawrence for in 1800 he contributed a romance on the same theme to a German periodical with the title of "Das Paradies der Liebe," subsequently reprinted in volume form as "Das Reich des Nairen." Lawrence afterwards translated the book into French and English: the latter version appeared in 1811 under the title of "The Empire of the Nairs." This book attracted the notice of Shelley and led him to write to Lawrence, but it does not appear that the correspondence was continued. A collection of Lawrence's miscellaneous pieces in poetry and prose was published as "The Etonian out of Bounds." In 1803 while Lawrence and his father were travelling on the Continent they were detained as prisoners of war at Verdun by Napoleon, and this adventure he made the subject of a play entitled "The Englishman at Verdun," and dealt with the same incident afterwards in a book entitled "The Picture of Verdun, or the Englishman Detained in France": an entertaining work in which this writer is seen at his best. Lawrence died unmarried on Sept. 26, 1840. On the title-pages of his books he describes himself as "Sir James Lawrence, Knight of Malta": he was generally spoken of as "The Chevalier Lawrence."

## THOMAS MEDWIN (1788-1869); THOMAS CHARLES MEDWIN

Thomas Medwin was born at Horsham, the third son of the attorney of that place, Thomas Charles Medwin. Concerning his relationship to Shelley, Medwin says "Miss Michell, Sir Bysshe's first wife, was my grandfather's first cousin; and my mother bore the same degree of consanguinity to Miss Pilfold [Shelley's Mother], their fathers being brothers." Shelley's correspondence with the elder Medwin is chiefly concerned with business, but Medwin lent his young relative a sum of money when he eloped with Harriet Westbrook; Shelley, however, when trouble arose, was most anxious to shield Medwin from any charge of having connived in the affair. The younger Medwin was sent to school at Zion House, Brentford, where Shelley shortly afterwards followed him. He became a lieutenant in the 24th Light Dragoons, and afterwards went with his regiment to India. Some of his adventures in India are described by him in his book, "The Angler in Wales." He issued subsequently, through the Olliers, at Shelley's recommendation "Sketches in Hindoostan and other poems," 1821, but apparently without any success. He was placed on half-pay in July, 1819, with the rank of captain, and he seems to have afterwards served in the 1st Life Guards, but at length he finally quitted the service.

Medwin visited Italy in the autumn of 1821, and at Pisa he was introduced by Shelley to Byron at the Lanfranchi Palace. Here he stayed from Nov. 20, 1821, to March, 1822, and then went

to Rome, but returned to Pisa in the August after Shelley's death. During the time he was acquainted with Byron he took notes of his talk and published them after the poet's death as *Conversations of Lord Byron*, 1824. The book was very successful and was reprinted in Paris and New York and translated into German, but the descriptions of Byron were held to be somewhat inaccurate. Medwin spent most of his life on the Continent; and in 1825 married in Italy Anne, Baroness Hamilton of Sweden, by whom he had two daughters, both of whom married Italian noblemen: he later separated from his wife. Medwin, however, continued his literary work, and in 1833 edited "The Shelley Papers," with a memoir which he afterwards expanded into a book of two volumes as a life of Shelley. The book contains some interesting particulars of Shelley's early life, especially of his schooldays, but it is carelessly written and Medwin's uncertain memory makes it untrustworthy. Among other books Medwin wrote a little volume, printed in Geneva, entitled "Oswald and Edwin." This book is referred to in Shelley's correspondence. He also wrote "Ahasuerus the Wanderer," 1823, and translated the "Agamemnon" and "Prometheus." At length he returned from the Continent to his birthplace, Horsham, where he died in 1859. Medwin seems to have taken himself and his work rather seriously, and was regarded in the Shelley circle as a bore, but Shelley suffered him with more than usual patience.

#### THOMAS MOORE (1779-1852)

As a youth, Shelley had a high regard for the opinion of Thomas Moore, and managed to draw him into correspondence in regard to his poem "Laon and Cythna." When he sent that poem to a publisher, probably Longman, he suggested that Moore should be asked to read it, and on its appearance sent Moore a copy, and afterwards the book in its altered form as "The Revolt of Islam." Moore guessed the authorship of Shelley's "Six Weeks' Tour," the allusions to Byron in that work giving him a clue to the authors. In later years Moore seems to have grown afraid of Shelley's influence on Byron, and although Shelley would not admit that he affected Byron's work, Byron did, as a matter of fact, derive considerable benefit from his association with Shelley. The allusions to Shelley in Moore's "Life of Byron" are by no means generous: it is not improbable that Murray's opinion affected Moore's views there expressed.

#### JOHN MURRAY (1778-1843)

John Murray's father, also named John, was a Scotchman, and an officer in the Navy. The younger Murray settled in London and founded the publishing house, that still bears his name, in 1768, at No. 32 Fleet Street. Besides publishing for Byron, Scott, Borrow, and Southey, Murray founded the Tory *Quarterly Review*. He declined to publish Mary Shelley's "Frankenstein," and judging from certain remarks in Byron's correspondence, he does not seem to have liked Shelley, whose democratic views evidently repelled him. John Murray maintained friendly relations with the authors

whose books he published, and Byron addressed to him some of his best letters. He was rather over-jealous of Byron's reputation, and did not put his name to the first edition of "Don Juan." He also destroyed Byron's "Memoirs," having purchased the right to do so from Moore for a large sum of money.

CHARLES HOWARD, ELEVENTH DUKE OF NORFOLK  
(1746-1815),

familiarly known as "Jockey of Norfolk," was the only son of Charles, tenth Duke. His boyhood was passed at Greystoke Castle, Cumberland, where his education was entrusted to Roman Catholic tutors, but he does not appear to have profited to any extent by their instructions. Although he possessed considerable ability he never attained to any degree of culture—he was, however, on attaining his majority, elected a Fellow, and in 1794 became President of the Royal Society. He engaged at an early age in politics; in 1774 he interested himself in the Carlisle election, and in the years 1780 and 1784, after he had turned Protestant, was returned as member for that borough, holding in the latter year a Lordship of the Treasury during the short administration of the Duke of Portland. On the death of the ninth Duke, in 1777, Charles Howard assumed the courtesy title of the Earl of Surrey, and succeeded his father in 1786 as eleventh Duke. In the meantime he had shown his courage by wearing his hair close cropped at a time when the powdered queue was in universal use by persons of his rank. He was now recognised as leader of the advanced Whig party, but he gave great offence in 1798 when at a great political dinner at the "Crown and Anchor" tavern he proposed the toast "Our sovereign's health: the majesty of the people!" Two days later he was deprived of his command of the West Riding of Yorkshire Regiment and the Lord-Lieutenancy for his revolutionary opinions. The Duke was loud and aggressive in manner, a *bon vivant*, and given to an over-indulgence in wine. "Nature, which had cast him in her coarsest mould," says Wraxall, "had not bestowed on him any of the external insignia of high descent. His person, large, muscular, and clumsy, was destitute of grace or dignity, though he possessed much activity. He might indeed have been mistaken for a grazier or butcher by his dress and appearance, but intelligence was marked in his features, which were likewise expressive of frankness and sincerity." It may be added that he was not over-clean in his habits, and had an habitual objection to soap and water. He was twice married, first in 1767 to Marian, daughter and heiress of John Coppinger, of Ballyvolune, co. Cork; she died in the following year. His second wife, whom he married in 1771, was Frances, daughter and heiress of Charles Fitzroy Scudamore, of Holme Lacey, Hereford: she became insane and died in 1820. The Duke died in 1815 without issue, but he had several illegitimate children.

With all his faults the Duke was known to have performed kind actions, among which will be remembered a fatherly interest in Shelley, whom he endeavoured to persuade to engage in a political career. He also attempted to reconcile Shelley with his father,



but it would be difficult to conceive two men more utterly unlike in ideas and person than the corpulent Duke of Norfolk and the author of "Queen Mab."

#### CATHERINE NUGENT

When Shelley and Harriet visited Dublin in February, 1812, they made the acquaintance of a Miss Catherine Nugent, age forty, an ardent patriot, and a shop-assistant to Mr. Newman, a furrier, who was engaged in business in Grafton Street. Shelley evidently first made Miss Nugent's acquaintance, for in writing to her on May 7, 1812, he says "Tho' you are Harriet's correspondent, remember that you were first my friend." The correspondence with Miss Nugent, which was continued by Harriet Shelley for many years, contains much that is interesting, and in her later letters written after her separation from Shelley not a little that is pathetic.

#### CHARLES OLLIER (1788-1859); JAMES OLLIER

Charles Ollier, who was descended from a family of French Protestants, started life as a clerk at Coutts's bank. About the year 1816 he founded a publishing house in partnership with his brother James, who looked after the commercial side of the business. Among his earlier books he issued Leigh Hunt's "Foliage" and the second edition of "Rimini." Leigh Hunt doubtless introduced him to Shelley, for whom he first published "A History of a Six Weeks' Tour," and this was followed by one of the "Hermit of Marlow" pamphlets and most of Shelley's other books. In 1820 Ollier brought out the first and only number of his *Literary Miscellany*, to which Peacock contributed his "Four Ages of Poetry." This article interested Shelley so much that he began a reply to it which was to comprise three parts, one of which only was completed. Ollier was a sincere lover of poetry, and he admired Keats's work sufficiently to undertake the publication of his first volume in 1817. Keats, however, attributed the failure of the book to Ollier's neglect, and he issued his next volume with another publisher. Ollier himself was a writer and produced several stories, namely "Altham," 1818; "Inesella," 1821; "Ferrans," 1842; and "Fallacies of Ghost Dreams and Omens," 1845. In later years his business failed, and he became literary adviser to Bentley, which position he held for many years.

#### J. J. PASCHOUD

was a printer and bookseller at Geneva to whom Shelley wrote respecting a translation of Godwin's "Political Justice" which he agreed to undertake. Paschoud's name also appears as the printer of Medwin's "Oswald and Edwin: an Oriental Sketch," 1820.

#### THOMAS LOVE PEACOCK (1785-1866),

the only son of a London glass-merchant, passed his early years at Chertsey, and at a private school at Englefield Green. From the age of sixteen Peacock studied on his own account, chiefly at the British Museum, reading extensively in English, French, Greek,

Latin and Italian literature, and becoming an accomplished scholar. Much of his time was devoted to writing verse, and in 1806, when he was nineteen, he published a small volume entitled "Palmyra and Other Poems," which was followed in 1810 by the first part of "The Genius of the Thames" (re-issued two years later with the second part) and "The Philosophy of Melancholy," 1812. Peacock was fond of natural scenery and was particularly attracted to Wales, where in 1812, while he was on one of his long walking tours, he is said to have first met Shelley. Peacock states that he saw Shelley for the first time in 1812, just before he went to Tanyrallt. They may, however, have been brought together in London by Thomas Hookham, who published for Peacock, and who sent Shelley some of his poems in August, 1812. In a letter to Hookham from Lynmouth, 1812, acknowledging these poems of Peacock's, Shelley speaks of him as "your friend." He says that he considers the conclusion of "Palmyra" as one of the finest pieces of poetry that he has ever read, and regrets that his powers are so circumscribed as to prevent him from becoming extensively useful to Peacock. What views, political and social, Peacock possessed were the very reverse of Shelley's, but they formed a sympathetic companionship in their Greek studies. When Shelley came to London in April, 1813, Peacock and he probably spent much of their time together; and in the autumn of that year Peacock accompanied Shelley and Harriet to the Lake District and Edinburgh. Shelley parted from his wife in the summer of 1814, and Peacock's sympathies were with Harriet, but probably he did not interfere in the matter. In the autumn of 1815 Peacock joined Shelley and Mary in an excursion on the Thames to Lechlade in Gloucestershire, which may have been the origin of that passion for boating which held Shelley to the end of his life. Shelley visited Switzerland for the second time in May, 1816, and selected Peacock, perhaps on account of his love of scenery, as the correspondent to whom to address his descriptive travel letters. On his return to England, Shelley stayed with Peacock at Great Marlow, Bucks, and in order to be near him he took a house in the same town and contemplated settling there for good. His health, however, broke down, and being recommended to go abroad, he left Marlow early in 1818, and after a brief visit to London where he continued to see Peacock, he quitted England for the last time in March of that year. Peacock's influence on Shelley was in every respect beneficial; besides encouraging him in his Greek studies and interesting him in sculpture, he took him to the theatre and the opera, and generally attempted to widen his friend's somewhat restricted view of life. Peacock was also a gainer by the association, for Shelley not only addressed to him his best letters from Italy, but conferred an annuity on him of £100 a year, appointed him as one of his executors and made him a handsome provision in his will. Peacock's life, apart from Shelley, was uneventful. He held an appointment in the East India Company from 1819 to 1856, retiring on a pension of £1,333 a year, and in 1820, he married Miss Gryffyd, "the beauty of Carnarvonshire," by whom he had a son and three daughters, one of whom became

the first wife of George Meredith. He wrote seven novels: "Headlong Hall," 1816; "Melincourt," 1817; "Nightmare Abbey," 1818, in which he is supposed to have introduced Shelley in the character of Scythrop; "Maid Marion," 1822; "The Misfortunes of Elphin," 1829; "Crochet Castle," 1831; and "Gryll Grange," 1860. To *Fraser's Magazine* for 1858, 1860, and 1862, Peacock contributed his memoirs of Shelley, a series of papers of the utmost interest and value, which, however, disappointed his contemporaries on account of his cold and impartial treatment of the subject. "The laughing Philosopher," as Peacock was called, was tall and commanding in appearance, a lover of good living, with strong prejudices, which form not the least attractive feature of his delightful stories.

#### JANETTA PHILLIPS

Dr. W. C. Coupland states that Miss Phillips's relatives were mostly resident in Bridgwater and its neighbourhood. She was the author of a little book issued to subscribers, bearing the title, "Poems by Janetta Phillips, Oxford. Printed by Collingwood & Co., 1811." From the correspondence it would appear that Shelley offered to defray the expenses of printing the volume, and that probably owing to his expulsion from Oxford this offer was declined. The contents of the volume hardly seems to justify Shelley's "generous estimate."

#### HENRY REVELEY

was the son of Mrs. Gisborne by her first husband, Willey Reveley. He was taken while still quite young to Italy, where he was educated by his step-father, John Gisborne; he afterwards went to the University of Pisa, and "distinguished himself by his scientific attainments." He applied for permission to complete his studies at the University of Paris, but his request was refused by Napoleon. With all his ability, Reveley was unsuccessful in his attempt to obtain employment as an engineer in Italy. Even the engine that Shelley employed Reveley to build for his steamboat was doomed to failure for want of funds. While he was engaged in constructing this engine, it became evident that Reveley experienced a difficulty in writing a letter in English, whereupon Shelley undertook to give him lessons. Claire Clairmont confessed that Reveley, who knew her history, desired to marry her, but she could not make up her mind to have him. He married in 1824 a sister of Copley Fielding, the painter, herself an artist. Reveley afterwards held for three years a Government appointment at the Cape, from which he was unjustly discharged, and then went to Western Australia, where he was practically the founder of the city of Perth. These particulars of Reveley's life are derived from an interesting account of him in Professor Dowden's "Life of Shelley."

#### THOMAS "CLIO" RICKMAN (1761-1834)

was the son of John Rickman, of "The Cliffe," Lewes, a Quaker who intended his son for the medical profession. At the age of seventeen he became acquainted with Thomas Paine and with him



joined the Headstrong Club, where his precocious gift for writing verse earned for him the name of "Clio." His association with Paine and an imprudent marriage were the means of alienating him from his family. He turned to bookselling for a livelihood and kept a shop first at Leadenhall Street, and afterwards at 3 Marylebone Street, where he spent the remainder of his days. In this house Paine lodged with him in 1791, and completed the second part of his "Rights of Man." Paine and Rickman were now "the centre of an admiring circle" which included Mary Wollstonecraft, Romney Horne Tooke, and others interested in liberal ideas. Rickman's "Poetical Scraps," 2 vols., 1803, which Shelley ordered in his letter, contains among its list of subscribers the name of Timothy Shelley, and possibly the book was familiar to Shelley in his father's house. Rickman, who survived two wives, left several children whom he named Paine, Washington, Rousseau, Petrarch, and Volney. He produced a considerable number of books, pamphlets, and verses, and he contributed to the *Yellow Dwarf*. His portrait was painted by Hazlitt.

#### ARCHIBALD HAMILTON ROWAN (1751-1834),

a son of Gavin Hamilton, he assumed the name of Rowan on inheriting some property from his grandfather. He went to Queen's College, Cambridge, and after three years' residence in Paris, he settled in Ireland, and joined the Society of United Irishmen, 1791, and was an ardent advocate of Catholic emancipation. In 1792 Rowan was tried, on a false charge, of circulating a seditious tract, was found guilty and imprisoned. He escaped, however, to France, and afterwards to America, but on receiving a pardon in 1803 he returned once more to Ireland.

#### JOSEPH SEVERN (1793-1879)

was the young artist who accompanied John Keats to Italy in 1820, and nursed him with great devotion through his last illness. He was one of the small number of English people who gathered round Shelley's grave when his ashes were buried in the English Cemetery at Rome. Severn was Consul at Rome, and was buried there beside Keats, fifty-eight years after the death of his friend.

#### HARRIET SHELLEY (1795-1816)

was the daughter of John Westbrook, who had made sufficient by 1811 as a tavern-house keeper in Mount Street, London, to retire from business, and was living in a house in Chapel Street, Grosvenor Square. Mr. Westbrook was known by the name of "Jew Westbrook," from his swarthy appearance, and his other daughter Eliza, some fifteen years Harriet's senior, resembled him in possessing dark eyes, and a quantity of coarse black hair. But Harriet Westbrook was a beauty: Miss Hellen Shelley describes her "as a very handsome girl, with a complexion quite unknown in those days—brilliant in pink and white—with hair quite like a poet's dream." Peacock says that 'she had a good figure, light, active and graceful. Her features were regular and well

proportioned. Her hair was light brown, and dressed with taste and simplicity. In her dress she was *simplex munditiis*. Her complexion was beautifully transparent, the tint of the blush rose shining through the lily. The tone of her voice was pleasant; her speech the essence of frankness and cordiality; her spirits always cheerful: her laugh spontaneous, hearty and joyous." When Shelley and Harriet first met she was a schoolfellow of Mary and Hellen Shelley at Miss Fenning's school on Clapham Common. In January, 1811, Shelley and his cousin, Charles Grove, called at Mr. Westbrook's with a present for Harriet from Mary Shelley, and from that time Shelley and Harriet corresponded with one another. When Shelley was living in London after his expulsion from Oxford he was frequently at the Westbrooks' house, apparently at Eliza's invitation, and he visited Harriet at Clapham when she returned to school. Older than her fellow pupils, Harriet was tormented by them chiefly on account of her correspondence with Shelley. It has been said that one of his letters was discovered by her school-mistress, who dismissed her from the school. On July 15 Shelley arrived at Cwm Elan, on a visit to his cousin, Thomas Grove, and about a fortnight later he heard from Harriet that attempts were being made to force her to return to school. Shelley at once returned to London, and proposed marriage as a means of escape from her unhappy position, and towards the end of August, probably the 24th, they left London in a hackney coach for Edinburgh. Shelley took the preliminary steps for marriage according to the Scottish law, but it is doubtful if he completed the form (see p. 137). Hogg, who had joined Shelley at Edinburgh, was compelled to return to York at the beginning of October, and Shelley and Harriet accompanied him. But business called Shelley to London on his arrival at York, and he left Harriet in the care of his friend, who at once began to annoy her with his attentions. She acquainted Shelley of the circumstances on his return, and after an explanation with Hogg, who seemed repentant and was forgiven, Shelley departed from York with Harriet for Keswick. Harriet's life is so much bound up with Shelley's until the summer of 1814, that it is unnecessary to describe it in detail. Her separation from Shelley has been summarised in a note which will be found on page 421 of this work, and her unhappy death is also referred to in another note on page 532; while some of her letters, written after Shelley left her, are printed in an appendix at page 991.

#### MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT SHELLEY (1797-1851)

was born in London on August 30, 1797, the only child of William Godwin and Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin, who died a few days after her birth. The child was at once taken charge of by Mrs. Reveley, who became Mrs. Gisborne, after she had refused the hand of William Godwin. Mary was devoted to her father, but she could not get on with her step-mother, and her childhood had been far from happy. Shortly before she completed her fifteenth year she spent a holiday of four months in Dundee, at the home of Mr. David Baxter, who had several daughters near her own age, and one of the



girls, Isobel Baxter, became Mary's intimate friend and correspondent. The day after her return home, Nov. 11, 1812, is remarkable from the fact that she then saw Shelley for the first time. He was dining at Godwin's house with Harriet, and Eliza Westbrook, and although there was apparently nothing noteworthy in the meeting, Shelley could not but have looked with interest on the daughter of Godwin and Mary Wollstonecraft. From June 3rd, 1813, to March 30, 1814, Mary was absent from home on another visit to the Baxters. Godwin records in his diary for May 5, 1814, that "Shelley called," and it is probable that Mary saw the young poet on that occasion for the second time. In his endeavours to raise money for the relief of Godwin's embarrassments, Shelley was frequently at Skinner Street during the ensuing weeks. Mary was now an interesting and intelligent girl in her seventeenth year, who before long attracted Shelley as perhaps no woman had before attracted him. Mrs. Marshall states in her "Life of Mary Shelley" (I do not know her authority) that during the visit of Shelley and Harriet to Scotland in 1813, the first shadow arose between them. It is evident that during the early months of 1814 Harriet's manner was changed towards him, and that his friendship with Mrs. Boinville, her sister, and her daughter, had tended to widen the breach between husband and wife. It so happened then that when Mary Godwin came into Shelley's life, he was lonely and in want of sympathy. Their intimacy soon grew into love on both sides, and on July 28, 1814, Mary united her fate with Shelley's and fled with him to Switzerland. They returned to England in the autumn to face some months of poverty, but early in 1815, Sir Bysshe Shelley died, and Shelley received a settled income from his father which enabled him henceforth to live in comfort. They went to Switzerland for the second time in May, 1816, when they met Byron at Geneva. Extracts from the journal that Mary kept were subsequently published in 1817 with some of Shelley's letters as a "History of a Six Week's Tour." But the holiday bore other fruit; during a period of rainy weather, Shelley, Mary, Byron, and Polidori, his physician, amused themselves by reading ghost stories, and they each agreed to write one. Mary Shelley set to work on "Frankenstein," which was ultimately published in 1818.

Shelley learnt of Harriet's death in December, 1816, and on the 30th of that month he married Mary Godwin. Her history for the next six years is so much a part of Shelley's that there is no occasion to describe it here. Her grief at the loss of her two children, William and Clara, was mitigated by the birth of a son (afterwards Sir Percy Florence Shelley) at Florence in 1819. After Shelley's death in July, 1822, Mary Shelley remained in Italy until August, 1823, when she returned to London. Her life henceforth was devoted to his memory, and the education of her son. One of her first tasks was to collect material for a volume of Shelley's "Posthumous Poems," which was published in 1824, the expenses being guaranteed by B. W. Procter, T. L. Beddoes, and T. F. Kelsall.

In 1823, Mary Shelley published her novel "Valperga," the proceeds of which she gave to her father. Other novels from her pen

followed : "The Last Man" in 1826, "Perkin Warbeck" in 1829, and "Lodore" in 1835, which, as Prof. Dowden discovered, is a veiled autobiography, describing the author's privations in London during the year 1813. Sir Timothy made a meagre provision for Mary Shelley and her son, but only on condition that she suppressed the "Posthumous Poems" (after more than 300 copies had been sold) and abstained from publishing any memoir of Shelley during her father-in-law's lifetime. These conditions were somewhat relaxed by 1839, when she gave to the world a valuable edition of Shelley's poems with her notes, and in the following year edited his "Essays, Letters from abroad, Translations and Fragments." From 1840 to 1843 Mary Shelley with her son paid several visits to the Continent, and in 1844 her last book, "Rambles in Germany and Italy," was published. On the death of Sir Timothy Shelley in 1844, the bequests under Shelley's will were paid, and she found herself in a position of comfort. She attempted to write Shelley's life, but did not continue the task. Her death occurred at Chester Square, London, on February 1, 1851, and she was buried at Bournemouth, whither the remains of her father and mother were afterwards conveyed.

SIR TIMOTHY SHELLEY, BART. (1753-1844),

was the son of Bysshe Shelley, who in 1806 was created the first baronet. Timothy was born in London in 1753 and married in 1791 Elizabeth, daughter of Charles Pilfold, of Effingham, Surrey. By her he had seven children : Percy Bysshe, the eldest ; Elizabeth, who died unmarried in 1831 ; Helen, who died an infant in 1793 ; Mary, married in 1819 to Daniel F. Haynes, of Lonsome, Surrey ; Hellen ; Margaret ; and John, married in 1827 to Elizabeth, eldest daughter of Charles Bowen, of Kilnacourt, Ireland. "In appearance," says Professor Dowden, "Sir Timothy was slight of figure, tall, very fair, with blue Shelley eyes. He had a better heart than his father, and not so clear a head. Bysshe knew his province and kept to it. Timothy Shelley had a wrong-headed way of meaning well and doing ill ; he had a semi-illiterate regard for letters, a mundane respect for religion ; his views on morals were of the most gentlemanly kind, but not exactly touched with enthusiasm ; he dealt in public affairs without possessing public spirit, and gave his party an unwavering vote when a member of the House of Commons ; in private life he was kindly, irritable, and despotic." It was this despotism that made friendly relations impossible between Shelley and his father. When Shelley made any step towards reconciliation it was met by impossible conditions from Sir Timothy with whom he had nothing in common, and for many years father and son were engaged in disputes about settlements and property. Sir Timothy agreed on the death of Sir Bysshe in 1815 to allow Shelley a yearly income of £1,000. On the death of Shelley, Sir Timothy offered to provide for his grandson Percy on condition that Mary Shelley gave up all further claims to the child. Although this proposal was not accepted, he helped Mary with the education of her boy, but he made it impossible for any biography of Shelley to appear until after his death, in 1844, at the age of ninety.

## HORACE SMITH (1779-1849)

was joint-author with his brother James, of the celebrated 'Rejected Addresses,' which were published in 1812. Horace had already written some novels, and he followed the "Addresses" with other parodies, though without the same success. Smith had received a training in a merchant's office, and as soon as it was over, he went on to the Stock Exchange, where he was so successful as to be able to retire from business in 1820. He was keenly interested in literature, and in 1817 he visited Shelley at Marlow. When Shelley went abroad, Smith continued to correspond with him, he undertook to manage the poet's business affairs in London, and was able to render him services on several occasions, sometimes by advancing money; his help was especially valuable when he managed to conciliate Shelley's father who had temporarily stopped his son's income. Smith promised to visit Shelley in Italy towards the end of 1821, but his wife was taken ill on the journey, and he stopped at Versailles—the journey was, however, not pursued, as Shelley's death occurred a few months later. Horace Smith was a general favourite: Shelley had the greatest admiration for him, and has paid a tribute to his good qualities in the "Letter to Maria Gisborne." Although an amusing parodist, Smith's serious poetry was not successful; his pastoral drama "Amarynthus the Nympholept," which excited Shelley's interest, however, may be reckoned as one of his best works.

## ROBERT SOUTHEY (1774-1843)

Shelley's personal association with Southey was brief, and it made little or no impression on the younger poet. He was, however, at the time a most ardent admirer of Southey's poetry, the study of which left its mark in Shelley's earlier verse. In the autumn of 1811, shortly after his marriage, Shelley came to Keswick with his wife, and her sister Eliza Westbrook. There, at Greta Hall, Southey was living a quiet industrious life, free from the strife of political factions. When the two poets met, Shelley was full of enthusiasm for his proposed campaign in Ireland, and Southey with the best intentions in attempting to dissuade him from his purpose, was not judicious in his methods. Shelley left Keswick disillusioned and disappointed with Southey's views, but still appreciating his poems. The opening passages of "Queen Mab" were modelled on Southey's "Thalaba the Destroyer." Shelley was at one time convinced that Southey was the writer of the savage *Quarterly Review* article, and he wrote to ask him either to acknowledge or disavow it. Southey was able to disclaim all knowledge of the reviewer, but in his reply he called Shelley to task in regard to his treatment of Harriet, and expressed his detestation of Shelley's views.

## JOHN JAMES STOCKDALE (1770-1847)

was the eldest son of John Stockdale, a Cumberland man who founded a publishing business in London about 1783, and married Mary Ridgway, sister of a well-known Piccadilly publisher of that name. The younger Stockdale was admitted to the freedom of



the Stationers Company in 1802, compiled a number of books himself, and gained a reputation by issuing fiction (*Miss Owenson's*, for instance), and poetry at the authors' expense. In 1826 Stockdale became notorious as the publisher of the scandalous "*Memoirs of Harriet Wilson*," which he probably wrote, and his "*Budget*" in which he printed Shelley's correspondence with him. In later years he was involved in a series of actions against Hansard, which were finally decided against him.

#### EDWARD JOHN TRELAWNY (1792-1881)

Trelawny, who was born the same year as Shelley, was, with the exception of Jane Williams, the last to survive of his correspondents. Belonging to a famous Cornish family, he entered the Navy at the age of eleven, but, owing to the rigour of the life, he deserted and joined a privateer. After some years of adventure in the East, he returned to England, and in 1821 visited Switzerland and Italy, where at Pisa he became acquainted through Williams with Shelley and Byron. When Shelley and Williams were drowned, Trelawny superintended their cremation, and arranged the interment of the poet at the Protestant Cemetery in Rome. He afterwards followed Byron to Greece, when he took part in the war of independence in that country. On his return to England he courted Mary Shelley, but without success, and published his "*Adventures of a Younger Son*," 1830, founded on his early life. But his most notable work published in 1858 was his "*Recollections of the Last Days of Shelley and Byron*." The account of the burning of Shelley's body had already appeared in Leigh Hunt's "*Lord Byron and Some of his Contemporaries*," 1828. What Hogg did for Shelley's youth, and Peacock for his early manhood, Trelawny performed for Shelley's last days. The book was based on notes taken at the time, and presents Shelley to the life, as he was in the year 1822. Twenty years after the appearance of the "*Recollections*," in 1878, Trelawny re-cast and expanded that work and issued it in two volumes with the title "*Records of Shelley, Byron, and the Author*." The "*Records*" are more pretentious than the "*Recollections*." Many additions were made, and some of the stories altered, but the earlier book still remains the better one.

Trelawny's last days were passed in England. A man of gigantic frame, he was vigorous to the end, and was much sought after by those who delighted to honour the last of Shelley's friends. He was always ready to talk about Shelley and Byron, and notes of his conversation have been published by Mr. W. M. Rossetti and Mr. Richard Edgcumbe; Mr. H. Buxton Forman is now preparing a life of Trelawny. He died on August 13, 1881, and after the cremation of his body, the ashes were conveyed to Rome and interred in the grave that he had long ago prepared for them beside Shelley's, in the Protestant cemetery.

#### JANE WILLIAMS (d. 1884)

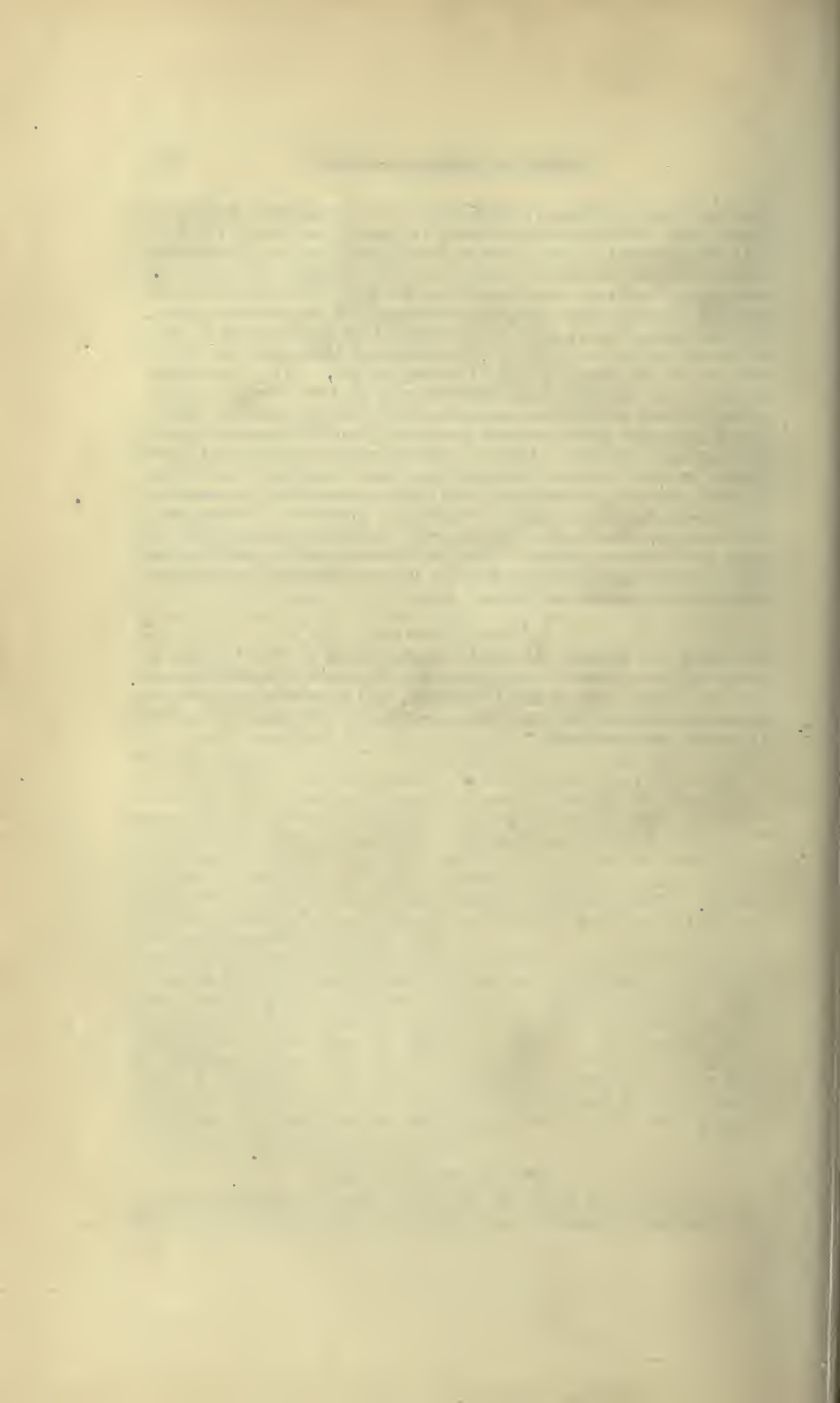
Edward Ellerker Williams was born on April 23, 1793, and like Shelley he went to Eton. His father was an officer in the army of



the East India Company, who died on the homeward voyage in June, 1809. Williams first entered the navy, but about the year 1811, he obtained a commission in the Eighth Dragoon Guards and went to India. "About 1819," says Dr. Richard Garnett, "he returned to England with the lady to whom he had united himself, sister of General John Wheeler Cleveland, of the Madras Army, and the Jane immortalized in so many of Shelley's poems." The Williamses arrived in Italy in the summer of 1821, and were introduced to the Shelleys at Pisa by Thomas Medwin. The two families became very intimate, and spent much of their time together, living as they did in the same building, but on separate floors. The guitar with which Shelley presented Jane Williams is now in the Bodleian Library, Oxford. Williams was associated with Shelley in the ill-fated *Ariel* or *Don Juan*, and the two friends perished together in that boat, and were cremated on the seashore on succeeding days, under Trelawny's direction. When Mrs. Williams returned to England Thomas Jefferson Hogg sought her hand, and she accepted him. She died in 1884, and by her direction a box containing the ashes of Edward Ellerker Williams was interred with her own remains at Kensal Green.

#### JOHN WILLIAMS

was agent to William Alexander Madocks, M.P., the founder of Tremadoc, and Shelley's landlord at Tanyrallt. Shelley shows from his letters that he liked Williams, and he was a good deal in his company when he was endeavouring to raise money for the Tremadoc embankment.



## ERRATA

- page vii, line 3 from bottom, *for* Edwin *read* Edward.
- „ xxxix, „ 5 „ „ *for* discribe *read* describe.
- „ xlii, „ 4 „ top, *for* 1813, *read* 1814.
- „ 1, *for* “Necessity for Atheism” *read* “Necessity of Atheism.”
- „ 5, line 8 from top, *read* they are now.
- „ 38, „ 11 „ „ of note *read* Home.
- „ 430, „ 1 „ „ „ „ W. J. Craig.
- „ 624, „ 5 „ „ „ „ Maddalo.
- „ 672, „ 11 „ „ *read* intersected there.
- „ 769, „ 24 „ „ „ that I shall take care.
- „ 834, „ 7 „ foot of note *read* Mavrocordato.
- „ 867, „ 5 „ „ „ *for* reserved *read* reversed.
- „ 925, „ 11 „ „ „ *for* has *read* had.
- „ 948, „ 20 „ top, *for* Preno *read* Presso.

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*Photo by W. S. Campbell*

THE MONUMENT IN CHRISTCHURCH PRIORY, HANTS  
TO PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY  
AND MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT SHELLEY

Designed by H. Weekes, A.R.A., 1854





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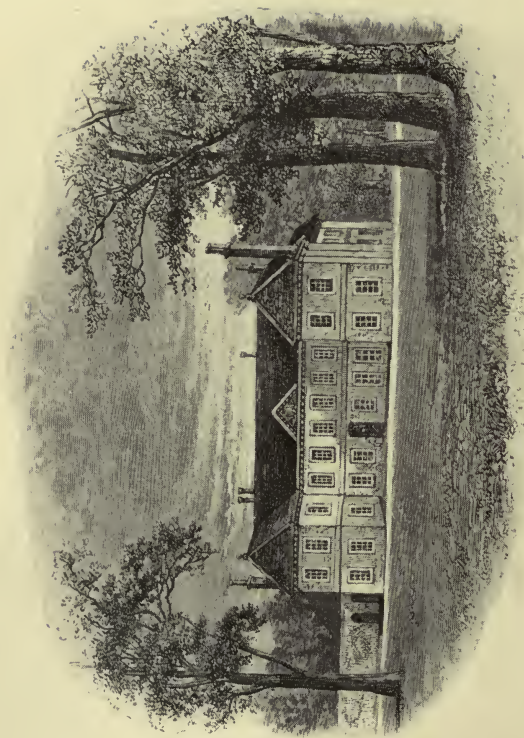
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FIELD PLACE, HORSHAM, 1812



# Letters of Shelley

VOL. I

## I. EARLY LETTERS

July 18, 1803, to March 2, 1811

ETON—"Zastrozzi"—"St. Irvyne"—Correspondence with Graham—The *Fiendmonger*—Stockdale—"Original Poems by Victor and Cazire"—"The Wandering Jew"—Oxford—"Posthumous Fragments of Margaret Nicholson"—Correspondence with Hogg—"Leonora"—The Missing "Satire" of 1811—Harriet Grove—Elizabeth Shelley—"A Poetical Essay on the Existing State of Things"—Peter Finnerty—Harriet Westbrook—"The Necessity for Atheism"—Letter to Leigh Hunt.

### 1. TO KATE —<sup>1</sup>

(Horsham)

Monday, July 18, 1803.

DEAR KATE,

We have proposed a day at the pond<sup>2</sup> next Wednesday; and, if you will come to-morrow morning, I would be much obliged to you; and, if you could any how bring Tom<sup>3</sup> over to stay all the night, I would thank you. We are to have a cold dinner over at the pond, and come home to eat a bit of roast chicken and peas at about nine o'clock. Mama depends upon your bringing Tom over to-morrow, and, if you don't, we shall be very much disappointed. Tell

<sup>1</sup> Apparently Shelley's earliest extant letter, written a few days before he completed his eleventh year. It was addressed to an aunt (name not given) of Thomas Medwin, who first printed it in his "Life of Shelley," Vol. I, p. 370.

<sup>2</sup> Perhaps this was Warnham Pond, the haunt of the "Great Tortoise," which is mentioned by Miss Hellen Shelley in her letter printed by Hogg, "Life of Shelley," Vol. I, p. 7.

<sup>3</sup> Shelley's cousin, Thomas Medwin.

the bearer not to forget to bring me a fairing,—which is some ginger-bread, sweetmeat, hunting-nuts, and a pocket-book. Now I end.

I am not

Your obedient servant,

P. B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],

Miss KATE,

Horsham, Sussex.

<sup>1</sup> Free P. B. SHELLEY.

## 2. TO LONGMAN & CO.

(London)

ETON COLLEGE,

May 7, 1809.

GENTLEMEN,

It is my intention to complete and publish a Romance,<sup>2</sup> of which I have already written a large portion, before the end of July.—My object in writing it was not pecuniary, as I am independent, being the heir of a gentleman of large fortune in the county of Sussex, and prosecuting my studies as an Oppidan<sup>3</sup> at Eton; from the many leisure hours I have, I have taken an opportunity of indulging

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Timothy Shelley as a member of Parliament possessed the privilege of franking his letters; here Shelley has playfully assumed his father's prerogative.

<sup>2</sup> Probably Shelley's first published book / "Zastrozzi," / a Romance / By / P. B. S. / quotation from "Paradise Lost," / London: / Printed for G. Wilkie and J. Robinson, / 57 Paternoster Row, / 1810. / Mr. D. F. MacCarthy states that "Zastrozzi" was published on June 5, 1810. Mr. H. Buxton Forman, who was the first to publish this letter, in his edition of Shelley's Prose Works, Vol. III, 329, states that Messrs. Longman's memorandum on the original is "We shall be happy to see the MS. when finished."

<sup>3</sup> Prof. Dowden states that "Shelley's name appears in the printed Montem lists of 1805 and 1808. When he came to Eton he was placed in the upper fourth form. In 1805 he was in the remove; in 1808 in the upper fifth; and when leaving in 1810 in the sixth form." The Rev. George Bethell, Shelley's tutor, an assistant-master, afterwards Vice-Provost, was "kind and good-humoured, but unluckily the dullest man in Eton." The house in which Shelley boarded was pulled down in 1863. (See "Life of Shelley," Vol. I, pp. 22, 25.)

my favourite propensity in writing. Should it produce any pecuniary advantages, so much the better for me, I do not expect it. If you would be so kind as to answer this, direct it to me at the Rev. George Bethell's. Might I likewise request the favour of secrecy until the Romance is published.

I am,

Your very humble servant,

PERCY SHELLEY.

Be so good as to tell me whether I shall send you the original manuscript when I have completed it or one corrected, etc.

### 3. TO EDWARD FERGUS GRAHAM

(London)

ETON,

April 1, 1810.

MY DEAR GRAHAM,

I will see you at Easter,—next Friday I shall be in London, but for a very short time—unable to call on you till Passion week—Robinson will take no trouble about the reviewers, let everything proper be done about the venal villains and I will settle with you when we meet at Easter.—We will all go in a posse to the bookseller's in Mr. Grove's<sup>1</sup> barouche and four—Shew them that we are no Grub Street garretters—but why Harriet more than any one else—a faint essay I see in return for my enquiry for Caroline—

We will not be cheated again—let us come over Jock,<sup>2</sup> for

<sup>1</sup> The Groves were Shelley's maternal cousins. There were three brothers, Thomas, the eldest, of Lincoln's Inn Fields, and probably the owner of the barouche and four; John, a surgeon; Charles Henry, who was successively an officer in the navy, a surgeon, and a clergyman; and two sisters, Harriet, mentioned in this letter, Shelley's first love; and Charlotte.

<sup>2</sup> "Jock" was apparently J. Robinson, the publisher of "Zastrozzi," mentioned above.

if he will not give me a devil of a price for my Poem and at least £60 for my new Romance<sup>1</sup> in three Volumes the dog shall not have them.

*Pouch* the reviewers—£10 will be sufficient I should suppose, and that I can with the greatest ease repay when we meet at Passion week. Send the reviews in which "Zastrozzi" is mentioned to Field Place, the *British review* is the hardest, let that be pouched well.—My note of hand if for any larger sum is quite at your service, as it is of consequence in fiction to establish your name as high as you can in the literary lists.

Adieu,

Yours most devotedly,

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

Let me hear how you proceed in the business of  
Reviewing. P. B. S.

[Addressed outside],  
EDWARD GRAHAM, Esq.,  
No. 29 Vine Street,  
Piccadilly.

#### 4. TO EDWARD FERGUS GRAHAM<sup>2</sup>

(London)

FIELD PLACE [HORSHAM],

Monday [April 23, 1810].

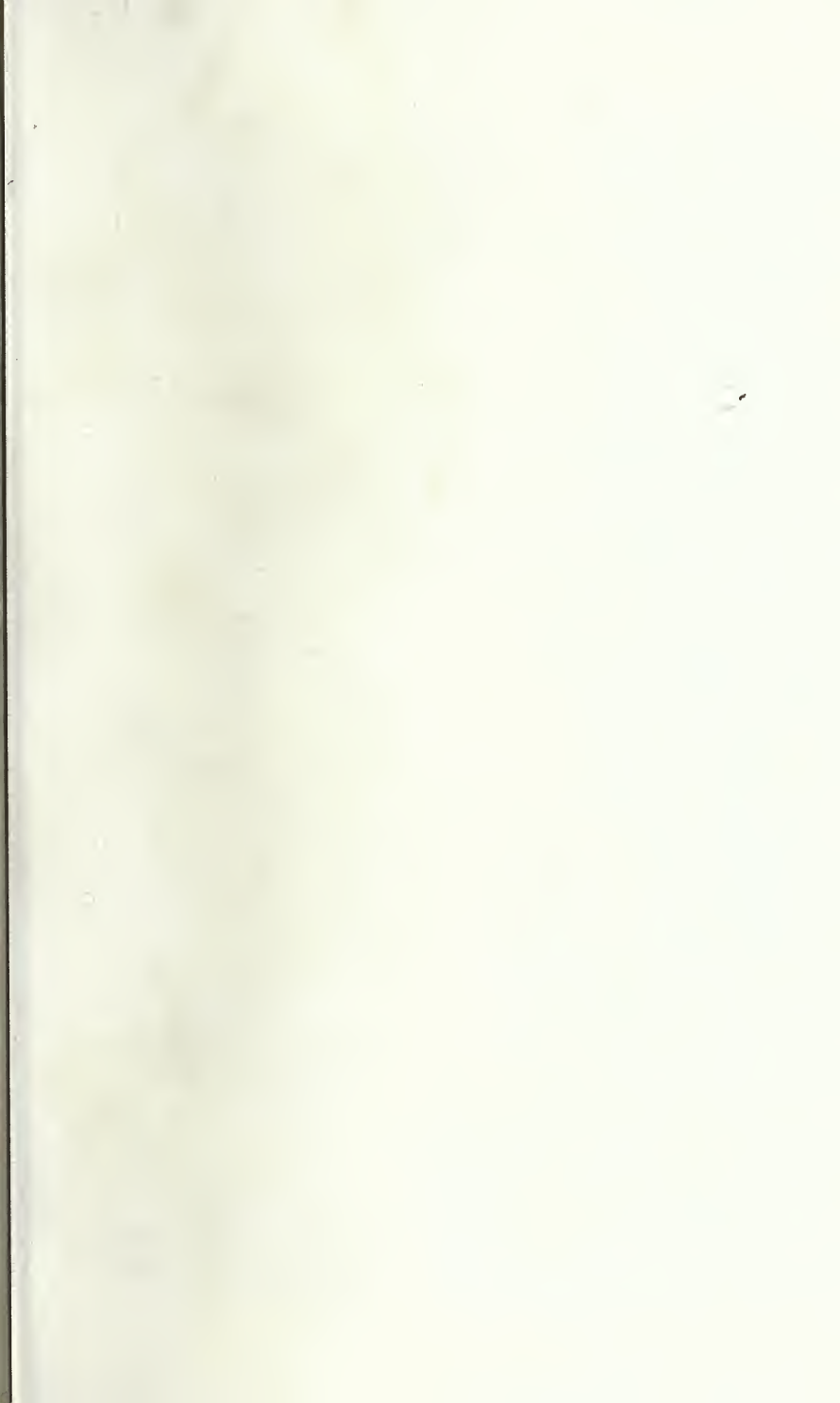
MY DEAR GRAHAM,

At half after twelve do you be walking up and down the

<sup>1</sup> Evidently Shelley's second and last novel / "St. Irvyne" ; / or, / "The Rosicrucian," / a Romance. / By / a gentleman / of the University of Oxford. / London : / Printed for J. J. Stockdale, / 41 Pall Mall, / 1811, which, however, only made one volume. See Shelley's letter to Stockdale, Dec. 10, 1810.

<sup>2</sup> I am able to print this interesting letter (in the true style of "Zastrozzi"), I believe for the first time, through the kindness of Mrs. Alfred Morrison, who has also allowed me to reproduce it in *facsimile* from the original in her possession. The letter, which is evidently a hoax, is the joint composition of Shelley and his eldest sister, Elizabeth (1794-1831).







avenue of trees near Clapham Church, and when you see a Post Chaise stop at Mrs. Fenning's<sup>1</sup> door, do you advance towards it, and without observing who are inside of it speak to them—An eventful and terrific mystery hangs over it—you are to change your name from Edward Fergus Graham to William Grove—prepare therefore for something extraordinary. There is more in a cucumber than you are aware of—in two cucumbers indeed ; they are almost 2s. 6d. a piece—reflect well upon that !!!—All this is to be done on Tuesday [April 24], neither Elisbh. or myself cares what else you have to do.

If Satan had never fallen  
Hell had been made for thee !

Send two " Zastrozzis " to Sir J. Dashwood in Harley Street, directed to F. Dashwood, Esq.—Send one to Ransom Morland's to be directed to Mr. Chenevix.

I remain,

Yours devotedly,

P. B. SHELLEY.

N.B.—The avenue is composed of vegetable substances moulded in the form of trees called by the multitude Elm trees. Elisabeth calls them so, but they all lean as if the wind had given them a box on the ear, you therefore will know them—Stalk along the road towards them—and mind and keep yourself concealed as my Mother brings a blood-stained stiletto which she purposes to make you bathe in the life-blood of her enemy.

Never mind the Death-demons, and skeletons dripping with the putrefaction of the grave, that occasionally may blast your straining eyeball.—Persevere even though Hell and destruction should yawn beneath your feet.

---

<sup>1</sup> Shelley's two younger sisters, Mary (born 1797) and Hellen (born 1799) were at Mrs. Fenning's school, Church House, which stood on the north side of Clapham Common, near the " Old Town," directly facing Trinity Church. The site is now occupied by Nelson Terrace.

Think of all this at the frightful hour of midnight, when the Hell-demon leans over your sleeping form and inspires those thoughts which eventually will lead you to the gates of destruction.

[Signed by] ELISABETH SHELLEY.

DEAR GRAHAM,

Eliza. Shelley

the fiend of the Sussex solitudes shrieked in the wilderness at midnight—he thirsts for thy detestable gore, impious Fergus.—But the day of retribution will arrive.

H + D + means Hell Devil.

[Written by Elizabeth Shelley]

DEAR GRAHAM,

We really expect you to meet us at Clapham in the way described by the *Fiendmonger*: should you not be able to be there in time we will call at Millers Hotel<sup>1</sup> in hopes you will be able to meet us there, but we hope to meet you at Clapham, as Vine Street is so far out of our way to L[incoln's Inn] Fields, and we wish to see you.

Your sincere Friend,

E. SHELLEY.

DEATH + HELL + DESTRUCTION if you fail.

Mind and come for we shall seriously expect your arrival, I think the trees are on the left hand of the church. P.B.S.

[Addressed outside],

EDWARD FERGUS H + D + GRAHAM, Esq.,

(No. 29) Vine Street,

Piccadilly,

London.

[Postmarks],

Horsham. Ap. 24. 1810.

---

<sup>1</sup> Miller's Hotel, Westminster Bridge, was patronised by Sir Timothy Shelley, when in London.





*From a photograph by Elliott & Fry, after a drawing, made by Shelley while at Eton, the original being in the possession of Mr. W. M. Rossetti, by whose kind permission, and that of Mr. L. V. Harcourt, it is here reproduced*

#### HERNE'S OAK



## 5. TO EDWARD FERGUS GRAHAM

(London)

ETON COLL[EGE],

May 29, 1810.

MY DEAR GRAHAM,

Another letter from Merle<sup>1</sup> and with a high flyer, perhaps you have not lately seen. It takes up an entire sheet in his small writing. Will he not leave me alone? I shall write to him to-day.<sup>2</sup> No I shall not write to him at all. I shall leave him entirely to his own ideas.

He talks about his "proud youth disdaining," and it is altogether so mysterious and unintelligible an epistle, that not knowing how the devil to answer it I shall leave it quite alone.

It says he wishes to conceal his sorrows and his guilt. May I ask you, Graham, out of curiosity, what he means by either? in short I am resolved to have no more to do with him, not even for drawing utensils, as I fear the man has some deep scheme. Where does he come from, and who is he?

Will you write to Mary<sup>3</sup> under cover to Miss Pigeon, Clapham Common, Surrey, where I wish you to send the books, also for Mary. They are all very well, and would be delighted at a letter from you.

My mother has had a violent bilious fever; she is now getting much better.

---

<sup>1</sup> It is suggested by Mr. Forman that William Henry Merle, author of "Costança, a Poem," "Odds and Ends in Prose and Verse," and some novels, was the anonymous writer of "A Newspaper Editor's Reminiscences," published in *Fraser's Magazine* in June, 1841. The writer of these recollections of Shelley was, at the time of his acquaintance with the poet, an assistant at Ackermann's, the art publisher in the Strand, and he may have been the Merle mentioned in this letter. The "Newspaper Editor" states that he had an interview with Shelley at Horsham after his expulsion from Oxford, which "closed with an indignant protest from Merle against Shelley's attacks on Christianity."—Prof. Dowden's "Life of Shelley," Vol. I, p. 124.

<sup>2</sup> This sentence is scored out in the original letter.

<sup>3</sup> Shelley's sister.

I had a letter from Harriet<sup>1</sup> this morning in which she tells me the crayons will do very well. Will you pay Merle the 11s., for I do not like to owe that kind of man anything, though I believe he is a liberal fellow; but I have seen too much of the world not to suspect his motives.

Your most affectionate,

P. B. SHELLEY.

Will you come on the 4th?<sup>2</sup> How is my father?

In the name of the most merciful God—"Arabian Nights." Will you send a "Zastrozzi" directed to the Revd. — Sayer, Leominster, near Arundel. Send it directly. I have written to say it was coming.

[Addressed outside],

EDWARD FERGUS GRAHAM, Esq.,

29 Vine Street, Piccadilly, London.

[Postmark], May 30, 1810.

#### 6. To JOHN JOSEPH STOCKDALE

(41 Pall Mall, London)

FIELD PLACE [HORSHAM],

September 6, 1810.

SIR,

I have to return you my thankful acknowledgment for the receipt of the books, which arrived as soon as I had any reason to expect, the superfluity shall be balanced as soon as I pay for some books which I shall trouble you to bind for me.—

I enclose you the title-page of the Poems,<sup>3</sup> which you

<sup>1</sup> Harriet Grove.

<sup>2</sup> For *Speech Day* at Eton, June 4th.

<sup>3</sup> Stockdale states in his *Budget*, 1826-7, that Shelley introduced himself to him early in the autumn of 1810. In consequence of some difference with his printer, Shelley requested Stockdale "to extricate him from a pecuniary difficulty": apparently by taking up the publication of his volume of Poems. On September 17th, 1810, Stockdale received "1,480 copies of a thin royal 8vo volume [64 pp.] in sheets"; and with the following title / "Original Poetry;" / By Victor and Cazire. / Call it not vain:—They do not err, / who say, that, when the poet dies / Mute Nature mourns her worshipper. / "Lay of the Last Minstrel." / Worthing: / Printed by C. and W. Phillips, / For the Authors; / and sold by J. J. Stockdale, 41 Pall Mall, / and all other Booksellers. / 1810. / The book (price 4s. in boards), was



will see you have mistaken on account of the illegibility of my hand-writing. I have had the last proof impression from my printer this morning, and I suppose the execution of the work will not be long delayed. As soon as it possibly can, it shall reach you, and believe me, Sir, grateful for the interest you take in it.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient, humble servant,

PERCY B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],

Mr. STOCKDALE, Bookseller,  
41 Pall Mall, London.

[Franked by]

T. SHELLEY.

## 7. TO EDWARD FERGUS GRAHAM

FIELD PLACE [HORSHAM],

Friday [September], 1810.

DEAR GRAHAM,

This is the other song :<sup>1</sup>

1

How stern are the woes of the desolate mourner,  
As he bends in still grief o'er the hallowed bier,  
As enanguished he turns from the laugh of the scorner,  
And drops to Perfection's remembrance a tear.

advertised the day following in the *Morning Chronicle* of September 18. The poems were the joint work of Shelley and his sister Elizabeth; and when Stockdale informed the poet that the volume contained a poem by M. G. Lewis, "he expressed the warmest resentment at the imposition practised on him by his coadjutor, and entreated me to destroy all the copies, of which about one hundred had been put into circulation." Dr. Garnett was the first to recall public attention to Shelley's volume, "Victor and Cazire," in his article "Shelley in Pall Mall," *Macmillan's Magazine*, 1860, based on the long-forgotten papers in *Stockdale's Budget*. But no copy of the book came to light until 1898. In that year one was found in the family library by Mr. V. E. G. Hussey, a grandson of the Rev. Charles Henry Grove, brother of Harriet Grove, to whom many of the poems are addressed. A facsimile of the volume was at once issued by Mr. John Lane, with an interesting introduction by the late Dr. Richard Garnett. Mr. T. J. Wise acquired this rare volume, of which now only three copies are known. "St. Edmond's Eve" has since been identified as the offending poem.

<sup>1</sup> No. 5 of the Songs in "St. Irvyne," Chap. IX, p. 171, Edit. 1811.

When floods of despair down his pale cheek are streaming,  
 When no blissful hope o'er his bosom is beaming,  
 Or if lulled for a time,<sup>1</sup> soon he starts from his dreaming,  
 And finds torn the soft ties to affection so dear.

## 2

Oh! when shall day dawn on the night of the grave,  
 Or summer succeed to the winter of Death,  
 Rest awhile hapless victim and Heaven will save,  
 The spirit that faded away with the breath.  
 Eternity points to its amaranth bower,  
 Where no clouds of fate o'er the sweet prospect [lower,]<sup>2</sup>  
 Unspeakable pleasure of goodness the dower,  
 Where woe fades away like the mist on the heath.

You will show all this to Woelff,<sup>3</sup> but you do not tell me how the other passes off. You well know I am not much of a hand at *love* songs, you see I mingle metaphysics with even this, but perhaps in this age of Philosophy that may be excused. You have not done what I told you. The *Morning Chronicle*<sup>4</sup> at least has not inserted it. I shall expect to hear a full account of all your proceedings.

The purse [?] will arrive by to-morrow's coach. I need not tell you again how anxiously I desire its acceptance, but of that you will judge when you recollect my last letter on the subject. Adieu—I cannot get a frank. Write soon.

I am, yours ever,

PERCY B. SHELLEY.

What think you of our Poetry?<sup>5</sup> What is said of it?  
 —no flattery, remember.

<sup>1</sup> "While" instead of "time" in "St. Irvyne."

<sup>2</sup> This word, which is omitted in the transcript, is supplied from "St. Irvyne."

<sup>3</sup> Joseph Woelff (1772-1814) musician and pianist, a native of Salzburg, of whom Graham was a pupil. He died in London.

<sup>4</sup> See note to letter to Stockdale, Sept. 6, 1810.

<sup>5</sup> "Original Poetry, by Victor and Cazire."

8. TO JOHN JOSEPH STOCKDALE  
(London)

FIELD PLACE [HORSHAM],

September 28, 1810.

SIR,

I sent, before I had the pleasure of knowing you, the MS. of a poem to Messieurs Ballantyne & Co.,<sup>1</sup> Edinburgh; they have declined publishing it with the enclosed letter: I now offer it to you, and depend upon your honour as a gentleman for a fair price for the copyright. It will be

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<sup>1</sup> Messrs. John Ballantyne & Co. offer the following ingenious excuse for declining to publish "The Wandering Jew," that "Even Walter Scott is assailed on all hands at present, by our Scotch spiritual and evangelical magazines and instructors, for having promulgated atheistical doctrines in the 'Lady of the Lake.'" The MS. never reached Stockdale's hands, although it seems to have been returned to Shelley. It was partly printed in *The Edinburgh Literary Journal* for June 27th and July 4th, 1829. The editor of this periodical states that the MS. of the poem was left for publication by Shelley, with an Edinburgh literary gentleman (Mr. Ballantyne), presumably when he visited Edinburgh in August, 1811. The preface is dated January, 1811, and the MS. bore the titles of "The Wandering Jew," or "The Victim of the Eternal Avenger." Shelley's duplicate copy of the poem was sent on to Stockdale (see his letter to Stockdale, Dec. 2, 1810), and it ultimately appeared in the pages of *Fraser's Magazine* in 1831, where it was apparently regarded as an unpublished work. This version differs considerably from the Edinburgh text. Thomas Medwin claimed that he was the joint author of the poem, but his account of it is not very satisfactory. "The Wandering Jew," edited with a valuable introduction by Mr. Bertram Dobell, was issued by the Shelley Society in 1887.

It is interesting to note that two extracts from "The Wandering Jew" were printed by Shelley as headings to Chap. VIII (p. 149) and Chap. X (p. 186) of his novel, "St. Irvyne," namely lines 435, 443-451, 780-790 of the Shelley Society's reprint. The couplet printed as a heading for Chap. II of the novel (p. 44)—

"The fiends of fate are heard to rave,  
And the death angel flaps his broad wing o'er the wave."

seem to suggest lines 841-2 of the poem—

"When the sightless fiends of the tempest rave,  
And hell-birds howl o'er the storm-blacken'd wave."

The ballad on p. 47 of "St. Irvyne" was probably written for "The Wandering Jew," as it commemorates the death of Rosa, who is one of the characters in the poem.

sent to you from Edinburgh. The subject is "The Wandering Jew." As to its containing Atheistical principles, I assure you I was wholly unaware of the fact hinted at. Your good sense will point out to you the impossibility of inculcating pernicious doctrines in a poem, which, as you will see is so totally abstract from any circumstances which occur under the possible view of mankind.

I am, Sir,

Your obliged and humble servant,

PERCY B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],

Mr. STOCKDALE,

Bookseller,

41 Pall Mall, London.

## 9. TO JOHN JOSEPH STOCKDALE

(41 Pall Mall, London)

UNIVERSITY COLL[EGE], OXFORD,<sup>1</sup>

Sunday, November 11, 1810.

SIR,

I wish you to obtain for me a book which answers to the following description. It is an Hebrew essay,<sup>2</sup> demonstrating that the Christian religion is false, and is mentioned in

<sup>1</sup> Shelley signed his name as a student in the books of University College, Oxford, on April 10, 1810, and went into residence early in Michaelmas term.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. B. Dobell tells me that the book to which Shelley refers is Isaac Ben Abraham's "חזק אמונה," or Faith Strengthened," Translated by Moses Mocatta. Printed but not published. 1851. Mr. Dobell, in his Catalogue of Books printed for private circulation, London, 1908, describes the book as follows: The translator in his address states that the work is intended exclusively for distribution among the Hebrew community. It was originally composed by Isaac Ben Abraham, an Israelite, a native of Lithunia. The work was published A.M. 5393; in De Rossi's "Dizionario Istorico" the author is designated as the most powerful opponent and refutant of the doctrines of Christianity that had ever appeared among the Jews. "The grand design of his polemics (as he himself tells us) is to establish and make manifest the sublime truth of Israel's Faith, and expose and refute the erroneous views on which Christianity is founded."



one of the numbers of the *Christian Observer*<sup>1</sup> of last spring, by a clergyman, as an unanswerable, yet sophistical argument.—If it is translated in Greek, Latin, or any of the European languages, I would thank you to send it me.

I am, Sir, your humble servant,

PERCY B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],

Mr. STOCKDALE, Bookseller,  
Pall Mall, London.

10. TO JOHN JOSEPH STOCKDALE

(41 Pall Mall, London)

UNIVERSITY COLL[EGE, OXFORD],

Nov[ember] 14, 1810.

DEAR SIR,

I return you the Romance<sup>2</sup> by this day's coach. I am much obligated by the trouble you have taken to fit it for the press.

I am, myself, by no means a good hand at correction, but I think I have obviated the principal objections which you allege.

Ginotti, as you will see, did *not* die by Wolfstein's hand, but by the influence of that natural magic which, when the secret was imparted to the latter, destroyed him. Mountfort being a character of inferior import, I did not think it necessary to state the catastrophe of *him*, as at best it could be but uninteresting. Eloise and Fitzeustace are married and happy, I suppose, and Megalena dies by the same means as Wolfstein. I do not myself see any other explanation that is required. As to the method of publishing it, I think as it is a thing which almost *mechanically* sells to circulating libraries, etc., I would wish it to be published on my *own* account.

I am surprised that you have not received the "Wandering Jew," and in consequence write to Mr. Ballantyne to

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Garnett failed to find any such reference in the *Christian Observer*.

<sup>2</sup> "St. Irvyne."

mention it ; you will doubtless, therefore, receive it soon. Should you still perceive in the romance any error of flagrant incoherency, etc., it must be altered, but conceive it will (being wholly so abrupt) not require it.

I am, your sincere humble servant,

PERCY B. SHELLEY.

Shall you make this in one or two volumes ? Mr. Robinson, of Paternoster Row, published "Zastrozzi."

[Addressed outside],

Mr. STOCKDALE,

Bookseller,

41 Pall Mall, London.

# 11. TO JOHN JOSEPH STOCKDALE

(41 Pall Mall, London)

UNI[VERSITY] COLL[EGE, OXFORD],

Monday, 19 November, 1810.

MY DEAR SIR,

I did not think it possible that the Romance would make but one small volume, it will at all events be larger than "Zastrozzi." What I mean as "Rosicrucian" is the elixir of eternal life which Ginotti has obtained, Mr. Godwin's romance of "St. Leon"<sup>1</sup> turns upon that superstition ; I enveloped it in mystery for the greater excitement of interest, and on a re-examination, you will perceive that Mountfort physically did kill Ginotti, which must appear from the latter's paleness.—

Will you have the goodness to send me Mr. Godwin's "Political Justice ?"<sup>1</sup>

When do you suppose "St. Irvyne" will be out ? If you have not yet got the "Wandering Jew" from Mr. B[allantyne], I will send you a MS. copy which I possess.

Yours sincerely,

P. B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],

Mr. STOCKDALE,

Bookseller,

41 Pall Mall, London.

<sup>1</sup> "St. Leon," by William Godwin, published in 1799. His "Enquiry Concerning Political Justice" appeared in 1793.



*From an aquatint published in 1802 by T. Malton*

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE AND HIGH STREET, OXFORD





## 12. TO EDWARD FERGUS GRAHAM

[UNIVERSITY COLLEGE], OXFORD,  
Nov[ember] 30, 1810.

MY DEAR GRAHAM,

I enclose a £5 note which is all I can immediately spare ; I shall see you in a fortnight. Whenever you mention money make it *visible*, as since having looked over your letter I can find nothing like it.—The part of the Epithalamium<sup>1</sup> which you mention (*i.e.*, from the end of Satan's triumph) is the production of a friend's *mistress* ; it had been concluded there, but she thought it abrupt and added this ; it is omitted in numbers of the copies,—that which

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<sup>1</sup> This letter relates to / Posthumous Fragments / of / Margaret Nicholson ; / Being poems found amongst the papers of that / noted female who attempted the life / of the King in 1786. / Edited by / John Fitzvictor. / Oxford : / Printed and sold by J. Munday. / 1810. / Hogg, who has given an account of this book in his " Life of Shelley," says that the poems were written by Shelley in good faith, with the exception of the Epithalamium, which was the work of "some rhymster of the day." On showing the poems to Hogg, he suggested that they should be turned into burlesque verses, to which proposal Shelley agreed, and Hogg assisted him in the design. The book, however, shows no signs of burlesque, save perhaps the title-page and the Epithalamium. The strange title was an afterthought. Margaret Nicholson, the mad washerwoman who made an attempt on the life of George III, had been sent to a lunatic asylum and was still living in 1810. The pamphlet was advertised in *The Oxford and City Herald* of Nov. 17, 1810, as " Just Published, price 2s." Mr. Henry Slatter, in the Biographical Summary to the Fourth Edition of Robert Montgomery's " Oxford," says that Shelley was brought to Oxford by his father, who placed him at University, his own College. Not liking the accommodation of an inn, Mr. Timothy Shelley went to a house where he had formerly lodged while at the University, and here he learnt that a son of his late landlord, Mr. Slatter, had become a partner in a bookselling and printing business. Mr. Shelley went to the shop, where he told his son to " buy whatever he required in books or stationery, and said, ' My son here,' pointing to him, ' has a literary turn ; he is already an author, and do pray indulge him in his printing freaks ;' one of the works alluded to was his Romance of ' St. Irvyne ; or the Rosicrucian ;' he soon put the parties to the test by writing some fugitive poetry, entitled ' Posthumous Fragments of Margaret Nicholson,' a work almost still-born, and directing the profits to be applied to Mr. Peter Finnerty."

I sent to my Mother of course did not contain it—I shall possibly send you the abuse to-day, but I am afraid that they will not insert it—But you mistake; the *Epithalamium* will make it sell like wildfire, and as the *Nephew*<sup>1</sup> is kept a profound secret, there can arise no danger from the indelicacy of the Aunt—It sells wonderfully here, and is become the fashionable subject of discussion—What particular subject do you mean, I cannot make out I confess.—Of course to my Father, Peg is a profound secret; he is better and recovering very fast.—How is the King and what is thought of Political affairs?

Will you tell me what I owe you?

Yours affect.,

P. B. SHELLEY.

### 13. To JOHN JOSEPH STOCKDALE

(41 Pall Mall, London)

[UNIVERSITY COLLEGE], OXFORD,

Dec[ember] 2, 1810.

DEAR SIR,

Will you, if you have got two copies of the "Wandering Jew" send one of them to me, as I have thought of some corrections which I wish to make,—your opinion on it will likewise much oblige me.

When do you suppose that Southey's "Curse of Kehama"<sup>2</sup> will come out? I am curious to see it, and when *does* "St. Irvyne" come out?

I shall be in London the middle of this month, when I will do myself the pleasure of calling on you.

Yours sincerely,

P. B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],

Mr. STOCKDALE, Bookseller,  
41 Pall Mall, London.

<sup>1</sup> John Fitzvictor is described in the short advertisement to the book as the author's nephew.

<sup>2</sup> Published towards the end of Dec., 1810; an advertisement of the poem "In 4to, price, £1 11s. 6d., boards. Printed for Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme & Brown, Paternoster Row," appeared in *The Morning Chronicle* for Dec. 26, 1810.

## 14. To JOHN JOSEPH STOCKDALE

[(41 Pall Mall, London)]

F[IELD] P[LACE, HORSHAM],  
December 18, 1810.

MY DEAR SIR,

I saw your advertisement of the Romance,<sup>1</sup> and approve of it highly ; it is likely to excite curiosity.—I would thank you to send copies directed as follows :—

Miss Marshall, Horsham, Sussex.

T. Medwin, Esq., Horsham, Sussex.

T. J. Hogg, Esq., Rev. [John] Dayrell's, Lymmington Dayrell, Buckingham, and six copies to myself.—In case the "Curse of Kehama" has yet appeared, I would thank you for that likewise.—I have in preparation a novel<sup>2</sup>; it is principally constructed to convey metaphysical and political opinions by way of conversation, it shall be sent to you as soon as completed, but it shall receive more correction than I trouble myself to give to wild romance and poetry—

Mr. Munday, of Oxford, will take some Romances ; I do not know whether he sends directly to you, or through the medium of some other bookseller. I will inclose the Printer's account for your inspection in a future letter.

Dear Sir,

Yours sincerely,

PERCY B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],

Mr. STOCKDALE, Bookseller,  
41 Pall Mall, London.

<sup>1</sup> A copy of the first edition of " St. Irvyne " was offered for sale by Messrs. Sotheby on July 22, 1908, and knocked down for £200. In this volume was inserted the following note in Shelley's handwriting. " The Author's respectful compts. to his Uncle, Mr. Parker, and begs his acceptance of the enclosed Romance. Mr. Parker's initial opinion on the book would be regarded an honor. Field Place, Dec. 10, 1810." On the verso is written " From Percy Bysshe Shelley to his Uncle, enclosing his romance of ' The Rosicrucian.' " Robert Parker, F.S.A., of Maidstone, had married Hellen, the eldest daughter of Sir Bysshe Shelley. A copy of the romance which Shelley presented to Robert Southey, was sold on June 8, 1875, for £4, 18s. 0d.

<sup>2</sup> Probably Shelley's novel " Leonora," see p. 18.



15. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG  
(Lincoln's Inn Fields)

FIELD PLACE [HORSHAM],  
Dec[ember] 20, 1810.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

The moment which announces your residence, I write. There is now need of all my art ; I must resort to deception.

My father called on S[tockdale] in London, who has converted him to sanctity. He mentioned my name, as a supporter of sceptical principles. My father wrote me, and I am now surrounded, environed by dangers, to which compared the devils, who besieged St. Anthony, were all inefficient. They attack me for my detestable principles ; I am reckoned an outcast ; yet I defy them, and laugh at their ineffectual efforts.<sup>1</sup>

S[tockdale] will no longer do for me ; I am at a loss whom to select.<sup>2</sup> S[tockdale]'s skull is very thick, but I am afraid

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<sup>1</sup> Stockdale states in his *Budget* that he had "given some delicate hints" to Mr. Timothy Shelley regarding his suspicions of the younger Shelley's "predispositions against revealed religion," and he prints the following letter on the subject: "Field Place, 23 Dec., 1810.—Sir, I take the earliest opportunity of expressing to you my best thanks for the very liberal and handsome manner in which you imparted to me the sentiments you held towards my son, and the open and friendly communication. I shall ever esteem it, and hold it in Remembrance. I will take an opportunity of calling on you again, when the call at St. Stephen's Chapel enforces my attendance by a call of the House. My son begs me to make his compliments to you. I have the honour to be, sir, Your very humble and obedient servant, T. Shelley. [To] Mr. Stockdale."

<sup>2</sup> Shelley is evidently here again speaking of his novel, "Leonora" (said to have been written in collaboration with Hogg), to which he refers in the preceding letter. Mr. Henry Slatter, of the firm of Munday & Slatter, the Oxford printers of "Margaret Nicholson," stated in the fourth edition of Robert Montgomery's "Oxford" that "Leonora" was put into the hands of his firm. The printing of it, however, was stopped "in consequence of discovering that he [Shelley] had woven free opinions throughout the work." The novel was afterwards taken to Mr. King, the printer at Abingdon, but the expulsion of Shelley and Hogg from Oxford brought the work to an end. Shelley probably sent a poem afterwards to Longman, the publisher, with whose firm he had corresponded, and who is evidently referred to as L—— in the following paragraph. See pp. 36, 48, 78.



that he will not believe my assertion ; indeed, should it gain credit with him, should he accept the offer of publication, there exist numbers who will find out, or imagine, a real tendency ; and booksellers possess more power than we are aware of in impeding the sale of any book containing opinions displeasing to them. I am disposed to offer it to Wilkie and Robinson, Paternoster Row, and to take it there myself ; they published Godwin's works, and it is scarcely possible to suppose that any one, layman or clergyman, will assert that these support Gospel doctrines. If that will not do, I must print it myself. Oxford, of course, would be most convenient for the correction of the press.

Mr. L[ongman ?]'s principles are not *very* severe ; he is more a votary to Mammon than God.

O ! I burn with impatience for the moment of the dissolution of intolerance ; it has injured me. I swear on the altar of perjured Love to revenge myself on the hated cause of the effect, which *even now* I can scarcely help deploring. Indeed, I think it is to the benefit of society to destroy the opinion which can annihilate the dearest of its ties. Inconveniences would now result from my *owning* the novel, which I have in preparation for the press. I give out, therefore, that I will publish no more ; every one here, but the select few who enter into its [*? my*] schemes believe my assertion. I will stab the wretch in secret. Let us hope that the wound which I inflict, though the dagger be concealed, will rankle in the heart of the adversary.

My father wished to withdraw me from college : I would not consent to it. There lowers a terrific tempest, but I stand, as it were, on a pharos, and smile exultingly at the vain beating of the billows below.

So much for egotism !

Your poetry pleases me very much ; the idea is beautiful, but I hope that the contrast is not from nature. The verses on the Dying Gladiator are good, but they seem

composed in a hurry. I am composing a *satirical* poem ;<sup>1</sup> I shall print it at Oxford, unless I find, on visiting him, that R[obinson] is ripe for printing whatever will sell. In case of that, he is my man.

It is not William Godwin,<sup>2</sup> who lives in Holborn : it is *John*, no relation to the other.

As to W.,<sup>3</sup> I wrote to him when in London, by way of a gentle alternative. He promised to write to me when he had time, seemed surprised at what I said, yet directed to me as the Reverend : his amazement must be extreme.

I shall not read Bishop Prettyman, or any more of them, unless I have some particular reason. Bigots will not argue ; it destroys the very nature of the thing to argue ; it is contrary to *faith*. How, therefore, could you suppose

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Forman draws attention in his "Shelley Library," p. 23, to a "missing satire of 1811" by Shelley, and suggests that he here refers to it. It cannot be positively asserted that the Satire, if ever printed, has been identified, but Mr. Forman has discovered a pamphlet bearing, as he says, "so many points of contact with Shelley" that he describes it "in the hope that someone may either bring forward other and better evidence of its being his, or such evidence of its being someone else's." . . . The title runs : / Lines / addressed / to / His Royal Highness / the / Prince of Wales, / on his Being appointed Regent. / By Philopatria, Jun. / Quotations from Horace / London. / Printed for Sherwood, Neely, and Jones, / Paternoster Row ; / and sold by all other booksellers. / 1811. / The publishers of this volume are those whose names appeared on the title-page of "Laon and Cythna," and one of the firm of the printers, Hamelin & Seyfang, namely C. F. Seyfang, "was the printer of 'Swellfoot the Tyrant,' another Shelley pamphlet about George IV." Mr. Forman further points out the similarity of the name on the title-page of the Satire to "Philobasileus," the signature of a letter to Graham written in the summer of 1811 (see p. 101), which contains an allusion suggesting that Shelley had in mind the Horatian motto on the title of the pamphlet.

<sup>2</sup> William Godwin was living at Skinner Street, Holborn Hill, which connected High Holborn with Newgate Street before the viaduct was built. John Godwin was William Godwin's brother.

<sup>3</sup> W. was probably one of the many persons of note to whom Shelley addressed letters on religious matters ; in this case the subject seems to have been the Athanasian Creed.

that one of these *liberal* gentlemen would listen to scepticism, on the subject even of St. Athanasius's sweeping anathema?

I have something else to tell you, and I will in another letter.

Love! dearest, sweetest power! how much are we indebted to thee! How much superior are even thy miseries to the pleasures which arise from other sources! how much superior to "fat, contented ignorance" is even the agony which thy votaries experience! Yes, my friend, I am now convinced that a monarchy is the only form of government (in a certain degree) which a lover ought to live under. Yet in this alone is subordination necessary. *Man* is equal, and I am convinced that equality will be the attendant on a more advanced and ameliorated state of society. But this is assertion, not proof,—indeed, there can be none, then you will say, excuse my believing it; willingly.

"St. Irvyne" is come out; it is sent to you at Dr. Dayrell's; you can get one in London by mentioning my name to Stockdale; you need not state your own, and as names are not *now* inscribed on the front of every existing creature, you run no risk of discovery in person, if it be a crime or a sin to procure my Novel.

How can you fancy that I shall ever think you mad; am not I the wildest, the most delirious of enthusiasm's offspring? On one subject I am cool, toleration; yet that coolness alone possesses me that I may with more certainty guide the spear to the breast of my adversary, with more certainty ensanguine it with the heart's blood of Intolerance—hated name!

Adieu! Down with Bigotry! Down with Intolerance! In this endeavour your most sincere friend will join his every power, his every feeble resource. Adieu!

16. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG  
(Lincoln's Inn Fields)

FIELD PLACE [HORSHAM],

December 23, 1810.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

The first desire which I felt on receiving your letters, was instantly to come to London, that a friend might sympathise in those sorrows which are beyond alleviation.<sup>1</sup> That I cannot do this week ; on Sunday or Monday next I will come if you still remain in town.

Why will you add to the never dying remorse which my egotizing folly has occasioned, for which, as long as its

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<sup>1</sup> Shelley had known his cousin, Harriet Grove, from childhood, and his warm regard for her had grown during the years 1809-1810 into love. According to Medwin's statement she had written a part of "Zastrozzi," and some of the poems in the "Victor and Cazire" volume were addressed to her. She was of the same age as Shelley, and is said to have resembled him in appearance. The Rev. Charles Henry Grove (writing in 1857) says that "Bysshe was at that time [having just left Eton] more attached to my sister Harriet than I can express, and I recollect well the moonlight walks we four had at Strode, and also at St. Irving's ; that, I think, was the name of the place, then the Duke of Norfolk's, at Horsham. (St. Irving's Hills, a beautiful place, on the right-hand side as you go from Horsham to Field Place, laid out by the famous Capability Brown, and full of magnificent forest trees, waterfalls, and rustic seats. The house was Elizabethan. All has been destroyed.) That was in the year 1810. After our visit at Field Place, we went to my brother's house in Lincoln's Inn Fields, where Bysshe, his mother, and Elizabeth joined us, and a very happy month we spent. Bysshe was full of life and spirits, and very well pleased with his successful devotion to my sister. In the course of that summer, to the best of my recollection, after we had retired into Wiltshire, a continual correspondence was going on, as, I believe, there had been before, between Bysshe and my sister Harriet. But she became uneasy at the tone of his letters on speculative subjects, at first consulting my mother, and subsequently my father also on the subject. This led at last, though I cannot exactly tell how, to the dissolution of an engagement between Bysshe and my sister, which had previously been permitted, both by his father and mine."—Hogg's "Shelley," Vol. II, pp. 550-1. In this letter he describes his feelings at her rejection of him, but he did not realize that it was hopeless for some time afterwards ; in the meantime he employed his favourite sister Elizabeth to attempt at a reconciliation. In the letters immediately following he dwells on the subject of his separation from Miss Grove.



fatal effects remain, never can I forgive myself, by accusing yourself of a feeling as intrusive, which I cannot but regard as another part of that amiability which has marked your character since first I had the happiness of your friendship ? Where exists the moral wrong of seeking the society of one whom I loved ? what offence to reason, to virtue, was there in desiring the communication of a lengthened correspondence, in order that both, she and myself, might see, if by coincidence of intellect we were willing to enter into a closer, an eternal union ? No, it is no offence to reason, or virtue ; it is obeying its most imperious dictates, it is complying with the designs of the Author of our nature : can this be immorality ? Can it be selfishness, or interested ambition, to seek the happiness of the object of attachment ? I am sure your own judgment, your own reason, must answer in the negative. Let me now ask you what reason was there then for *despair*, even supposing my love to have been incurable ?

Her disposition was in all probability divested of the enthusiasm by which mine is characterised, could therefore hers be prophetic ? She might not be susceptible of that feeling which arises from an admiration of virtue, when abstracted from identity.

My sister attempted sometimes to plead my cause, but unsuccessfully. She said :

“ Even supposing I take your representation of your brother’s qualities and sentiments, which as you coincide in and admire, I may fairly imagine to be exaggerated, although *you* may not be aware of the exaggeration ; what right have *I*, admitting that he is so superior, to enter into an intimacy which must end in delusive disappointment, when he finds how really inferior I am to the being which his heated imagination has pictured ? ”

This was unanswerable, particularly as the prejudiced description of a sister, who loves her brother as she does, might, indeed *must*, have given to her an erroneously exalted idea of the superiority of my mental attainments.

You have said that the philosophy which I pursued is not uncongenial with the strictest morality; you must see that it militates with the received opinions of the world; what,<sup>1</sup> therefore, does it offend; but prejudice and superstition, that superstitious bigotry, inspired by the system upon which at present the world acts, of believing all that we are told as incontrovertible facts?

I hope that what I have said will induce you to allow me still, and all the more, to remain your friend.

I hope that you will soon have an opportunity of seeing, of conversing, with Elizabeth.

How sorry I am that I cannot invite you here now. I will tell you the reason when we meet. Believe me, my dear friend, when I assert that I shall *ever* continue so to you. I have reason to lament deeply the sorrows with which fate has marked my life; I am not so deeply debased by it, however, [but] that the exertions for the happiness of my friend shall supersede considerations of narrower and selfish interests, but that his woes should claim a sigh before one repining thought arose at my own lot. I know the cause of all human disappointment—worldly prejudice; mine is the same, I know also its origin,—bigotry.

Adieu! Write again. Believe me your most sincere friend. Adieu!

P. B. S.

# 17. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG

(Lincoln's Inn Fields)

FIELD PLACE [HORSHAM],

Dec[ember] 26, .1810.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Why do you express yourself so flatteringly grateful to me, when I ought to experience that sensation towards you in the highest manner of which our nature is capable? Why do you yet suppose that you have offended against

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<sup>1</sup> In his "Life of Shelley" Hogg has printed this word as "that."

any of those rules for our conduct which we ought to regard with veneration ?

What is delicacy ? Come, I must be severe with myself, I must irritate the wound which I wish to heal.

Supposing the object of my affections does not regard me, how have you transgressed against its dictates ; in what have you offended ? What is delicacy ? Let us define it in the light in which you take it. I conceive it to be that, inherent repugnance to injuring others, particularly as regarding the objects of their dearer preference, which beings of superior intelligence feel. In what, then, let me ask again, if I do not think you culpable, in what, then, have you offended ? Tell me, then, my dear friend, no more of sorrow, no more of remorse, at what you have said. Circumstances have operated in such a manner, that the attainment of the object of my heart was impossible, whether on account of extraneous influences, or from a feeling which possessed her mind, which told her *not* to deceive another, not to give him the possibility of disappointment. I feel I touch the string which, if vibrated, excites acute pain, but *truth* and my real feelings, which I wish to give you a clear idea of, overcome my resolve never to speak on the subject again. It is with reluctance to my own feelings that I have entered into this cold disquisition, when your heart sympathizes so deeply in my affliction ; but for Heaven's sake consider, and do not criminate yourself, do not wrong the motives which actuated you upon so feeble a ground as that of *delicacy*. I do this, I say this in justice as well as friendship ; I demand that you should do *justice* to yourself, then no more is required to give you at all events a consciousness of rectitude.

I read most of your letters to my sister ;<sup>1</sup> she frequently inquires after you, and we talk of you often. I do not wish to awaken her intellect too powerfully ; this must be my

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<sup>1</sup> His sister, Elizabeth Shelley.

apology for not communicating all my speculations to her. Thanks, *truly* thanks for opening your heart to me, for telling me your feelings towards me. Dare I do the same to you? I dare not to myself, how can I to another, perfect as he may be? I dare not even to God, whose mercy is great. My unhappiness is excessive; but I will cease; I will no more speak in riddles, but now quit for *ever* a subject which awakens too powerful susceptibilities for even negative misery. But that which injured me shall perish! I even now by anticipation hear the expiring yell of intolerance! Pardon me! My sorrows are not so undeserved as you believe; they are obtrusive to narrate to myself; they must be so to you. Let me wish you an eternity of happiness! I wish you knew Elizabeth, she is a great consolation to me; but if all be well, my wishes on that score will soon be accomplished. On Monday night you will see me. I cannot bear to suffer alone. Adieu! I have scarce a moment's time, only to tell you how sincerely I am your friend.

### 18. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG

(London)

FIELD PLACE [HORSHAM],

Dec[ember] 28, 1810.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

The encomium of one incapable of flattery is indeed flattering. Your discrimination of that chapter is more just than the praises which you bestow on so unconnected a thing as the romance taken collectively. I wish you very much to publish a tale; send one to a publisher. Oh, here we are in the midst of all the uncongenial jollities of Christmas, when you are compelled to contribute to the merriment of others—when you are compelled to live under the severest of all restraints, concealment of feelings pregnant enough in themselves, how terrible is your lot! I am learning abstraction, but I fear that my proficiency



will be but trifling. I cannot, dare not, speak of myself. Why do you still continue to say, Do not despond, that you must not despair ?

I admit that this despair would be unauthorized, when it was rational to suppose that at some future time mutual knowledge would awaken reciprocity of feeling.

Your letter arrived at a moment when I could least bear any additional excitement of feelings. I have succeeded now in calming my mind, but at first I knew not how to act ; indecision and a fear of injuring another, by complying with what perhaps were the real wishes of my bosom, distracted me. I do not tell you this by way of confession of my own state, for I believe that I may not be sufficiently aware of what I feel myself, even to own it to myself. Believe me, my dear friend, that my only ultimate wishes *now* are for your happiness and that of my sisters. At present a thousand barriers oppose any more intimate connexion, any union with another, which, although unnatural and fettering to a virtuous mind, are nevertheless unconquerable.

I will, if possible, come to London on Monday [Dec. 31], certainly some time next week. I shall come about six o'clock, and will remain with you until that time the next morning, when I will tell you my reasons for wishing to return. Adieu. Excuse the shortness of this, as the servant waits. I will write on Sunday. [Dec. 30.]

Yours most sincerely.

19. To THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG

(Lincoln's Inn Fields, London)

FIELD PLACE [HORSHAM],

Jan[uary] 2, 1811.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I cannot come to London before next week. I am but just returned to Field Place from an inefficient effort. Why do you, my happy friend, tell me of perfection in

love ? Is she not gone ? And yet I breathe, I live ! But adieu to egotism ; I am sick to death at the name of *self*. Oh, your theory cost me much reflection ; I have not ceased to think of it since your letter came, which was put into my hands at the moment of departure on Sunday morning. Is it not, however, founded on that *hateful* principle ? Is it *self* which you propose to raise to a state of superiority by your system of eternal perfectibility in love ? No ! Were this frame rendered eternal, were the particles which compose it, both as to intellect and matter, indestructible, and then to undergo torments such as now we should shudder to think of even in a dream,—to undergo this, I say, for the extension of happiness to those for whom we feel a vivid preference ; then would I love, adore, idolize your theory—wild, unfounded as it might be : but no. I can conceive neither of these to be correct, considering matters in a philosophical light, it evidently appears (if it is not treason to speak thus coolly on a subject too deliriously ecstatic) that we were not destined for misery. What then, shall happiness arise from ? Can we hesitate ? Love, dear love, and though every mental faculty is bewildered by the agony, which is in this life its too constant attendant, still is not that very agony to be preferred to the most thrilling sensualities of epicurism ?

I have wandered in the snow, for I am cold, wet, and mad. Pardon me, pardon my delirious egotism ; this really shall be the last. My sister is well ; I fear she is not quite happy on my account, but is much more cheerful than she was some days ago. I hope you will publish a tale ; I shall then give a copy to Elizabeth, unless *you* forbid it. I would do it not only to show her what your ideas are on the subject of works of imagination, and to interest her, but that she should see her brother's friend in a new point of view. When you examine her character you will find humanity, not divinity, amiable as the former may sometimes be : however, I, a brother, must not write treason against my sister ; so I will check my volubility. Do not

direct your next letter to Field Place, only to Horsham.  
To-morrow I will write more connectedly.

Yours sincerely.

20. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG  
(London)

FIELD PLACE [HORSHAM],  
Jan[uary] 3, 1811.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Before we deny or believe the existence of anything, it is necessary that we should have a tolerably clear idea of what it is. The word "God," a vague word, has been, and will continue to be, the source of numberless errors, until it is erased from the nomenclature of philosophy. Does it not imply "the soul of the universe, the intelligent and *necessarily* beneficent, actuating principle." This it is impossible not to believe in; I may not be able to adduce proofs, but I think that the leaf of a tree, the meanest insect on which we trample, are, in themselves, arguments more conclusive than any which can be advanced, that some vast intellect animates infinity. If we disbelieve *this*, the strongest argument in support of the existence of a future state instantly becomes annihilated. I confess that I think Pope's

All are but parts of one stupendous whole,<sup>(1)</sup>

something more than poetry. It has ever been my favourite theory, for the immoral soul, "never to be able to die, never to escape from some shrine as chilling as the clay-formed dungeon, which now it inhabits"; it is the future punishment which I can most easily believe in.

Love, love *infinite in extent*, eternal in duration, yet (allowing your theory in that point) perfectible, should be the reward; but can we suppose that this reward will arise, spontaneously, as a necessary appendage to our

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(1) "Essay on Man," I, line 267.

nature, or that our nature itself could be without cause—a first cause—a God? When do we see effects arise without causes? What causes are there without corresponding effects? Yet here, I swear—and as I break my oaths, may Infinity, Eternity blast me—here I swear that never will I forgive intolerance! It is the only point on which I allow myself to encourage revenge; every moment shall be devoted to my object, which I can spare; and let me hope that it will not be a blow which spends itself, and leaves the wretch at rest,—but lasting, long revenge! I am convinced, too, that it is of great disservice to society—that it encourages prejudices which strike at the root of the dearest, the tenderest of its ties. Oh! how I wish I were the avenger!—that it were mine to crush the demon; to hurl him to his native hell, never to rise again, and thus to establish for ever perfect and universal toleration, I expect to gratify some of this insatiable feeling in poetry. You shall see—you shall hear—how it has injured me. She is no longer mine! she abhors me as a sceptic, as what *she* was before! Oh, bigotry! When I pardon this last, this severest of thy persecutions, may Heaven (if there be wrath in Heaven) blast me! Has vengeance, in its armoury of wrath, a punishment more dreadful? Yet, forgive me, I have done; and were it not for your great desire to know *why* I consider myself as the victim of severer anguish [? I do not think] that I could have entered into this brief recital.

I am afraid there is selfishness in the passion of love, for I cannot avoid feeling every instant as if my soul was bursting; but I *will* feel no more! It is selfish. I would feel for others, but for myself—oh! how much rather would I expire in the struggle! Yes, there were a relief! Is suicide wrong? I slept with a loaded pistol and some poison, last night, but did not die. I could not come on Monday, my sister would not part with me; but I must—I will see you soon. My sister is now comparatively happy; she has felt deeply for me. Had it not been for her—had



it not been for a sense of what I owed to her, to *you*, I should have bidden you a final farewell some time ago. But can the dead feel; dawns any day-beam on the night of dissolution?

Pray publish your tale; demand one hundred pounds for it from any publisher;—he will give it in the event. It is delightful, it is divine—not that I like your heroine—but the poor Mary is a character worthy of Heaven. I adore her!

Adieu, my dear friend. Your sincere,

P. B. S.

W——<sup>1</sup> has written. I have read his letter. It is too long to answer. I continue to dissipate Elizabeth's melancholy by keeping her as much as possible employed in poetry. You shall see some to-morrow. I cannot tell you when I can come to town. I wish it very much.

21. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG

(University College, Oxford)

FIELD PLACE [HORSHAM],

Jan[uary] 6, 1811.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Dare I request *one* favour for *myself*—for my own sake? not the keenest anguish which the most unrelenting tyrant could invent, should force me to request from you so great a sacrifice of friendship. It is a beloved sister's happiness which forces me to this. She saw me when I received your letter of yesterday. She saw the conflict of my soul. At first she said nothing; and then she exclaimed, "Redirect it, and send it instantly to the post!"<sup>2</sup> Believe me, I feel far more than I will *allow* myself to express, for the cruel

<sup>1</sup> See p. 20.

<sup>2</sup> It has been suggested by Mr. Wise that Shelley guessed this letter contained some references to the painful subject of Miss Grove, and that his sister Elizabeth induced him to return it unread to Hogg.

disappointments which I have undergone. Write to me whatever you wish to say; you may say what you will on *other* subjects; but on *that* I dare not even read what you would write. *Forget* her? What would I have not given up to have been thus happy? I thought I knew the means by which it might have been effected. Yet I consider what a female sacrifices when she returns the attachment even of one whose faith she supposes inviolable. Hard is the agony which is indescribable, which is only to be felt. Will she not encounter the opprobrium of the world; and what is more severe (generally speaking) the dereliction and contempt of those who before had avowed themselves most attached to her? I did not encourage the remotest suspicion. I was convinced of her truth, as I was of my own existence. Still was it not *natural* in her, even although she might return the most enthusiastic prepossessions arising from the consciousness of intellectual sympathy, ignorant, as she was, of *some* of my opinions, of my sensations (for *unlimited* confidence is requisite for the existence of mutual love) to have some doubts—some fears? Besides, when in her natural character her spirits are good, her conversation animated, and she was almost in consequence ignorant of the refinements in love, which can only be attained by solitary reflection. Forsake her! Forsake one whom I loved! Can I? Never! But she is gone—she is lost to me for ever; for ever! There is a mystery which I dare not [try?] to clear up; it is the only point on which I will be reserved to you. I have tried the methods you would have recommended. I followed her. I would have followed her to the end of the earth, but—If you value the little happiness which yet remains, do not mention again to me, sorrows which, if you could share in, would wound a heart, which it now shall be my endeavour to heal of those pains which, through sympathy with me, it has already suffered. I will crush Intolerance. I will, at least, attempt it. To fail even in so useful an attempt were glorious!

I inclose some poetry:<sup>1</sup>

Oh! take the pure gem to where southerly breezes,  
 Waft repose to some bosom as faithful as fair,  
 In which the warm current of love never freezes,  
 As it rises unmingled with selfishness there,  
 Which, untainted by pride, unpolluted by care,  
 Might dissolve the dim icedrop, might bid it arise,  
 Too pure for these regions, to gleam in the skies.

Or where the stern warrior, his country defending,  
 Dares fearless the dark-rolling battle to pour,  
 Or o'er the fell corpse of a dread tyrant bending,  
 Where patriotism red with his guilt-reeking gore,  
 Plants liberty's flag on the slave-peopled shore,  
 With victory's cry, with the shout of the free,  
 Let it fly, taintless spirit, to mingle with thee.

For I found the pure gem, when the daybeam returning,  
 Ineffectual gleams on the snow-covered plain,  
 When to others the wished-for arrival of morning  
 Brings relief to long visions of soul-racking pain;  
 But regret is an insult—to grieve is in vain:  
 And why should we grieve that a spirit so fair  
 Seeks Heaven to mix with its own kindred there?

But still 'twas some spirit of kindness descending,<sup>1</sup>  
 To share in the load of mortality's woe,  
 Who over thy lowly-built sepulchre bending  
 Bade sympathy's tenderest tear-drop to flow.  
 Not for *thee*, soft compassion, celestials did know,  
 But if *angels* can weep, sure *man* may repine,  
 May weep in mute grief o'er thy low-laid shrine.

And did I then say, for the altar of glory,  
 That the earliest, the loveliest of flowers I'd entwine,  
 Tho' with millions of blood-reeking victims 'twas gory,  
 Tho' the tears of the widow polluted its shrine,  
 Tho' around it the orphans, the fatherless pine?  
 Oh! Fame, all thy glories I'd yield for a tear  
 To shed on the grave of a heart so sincere.

I am very cold this morning, so you must excuse bad writing, as I have been most of the night pacing a churchyard. I must now engage in scenes of strong interest.

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<sup>1</sup> In an autograph MS. copy of Shelley's, this poem is named "On an Icicle that clung to the grass of a grave," and is dated (perhaps incorrectly) 1809.

You see the subject of the foregoing. I send it, because it may amuse you. Your letter has just arrived ; I will send W——'s<sup>1</sup> to University, when I can collect them. If it amuses you, you can answer him ; if not, I will.

I will consider your argument against the Non-existence of a Deity. Do you allow that some *supernatural* power actuates the organization of physical causes ? It is evident so far as this, that if *power* and *wisdom* are employed in the continual arrangement of these affairs, that this power, etc., is something out of the comprehension of man, as he now exists ; at least if we allow that the soul is *not* matter. Then, admitting that this actuating principle is such as I have described, admitting it to be finite, there must be something beyond this which influences *its* actions and all this series advancing, as if it does in one instance, it must to infinity, must at least terminate, if it can terminate, in the existence which may be called a Deity. And *if* this Deity thus influences the actions of the Spirits (if I may be allowed the expression), which take care of minor events (supposing your theory to be true), why is it *not* the soul of the Universe ; in what is it not analogous to the soul of man ? Why *too* is *not* gravitation the soul of a clock ? I entertain no doubt of the fact, although it possesses no capabilities of variation ; if the principle of life (that of reason put out of the question, as in the cases of dogs, horses, and oysters) be *soul*, then gravitation is as much the soul of a clock, as animation is that of an oyster. I think we may not inaptly define *Soul* as the most supreme, superior, and distinguished abstract appendage to the nature of anything.

But I will write again : my head is rather dizzy to-day, on account of not taking rest, and a slight attack of typhus. Adieu ! I will write soon.

Your sincerest,

PERCY B. SHELLEY.

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<sup>1</sup> See pp. 20, 31, 43.



## 22. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG

(University College, Oxford)

FIELD PLACE [HORSHAM],

Jan[uary] 11, 1811.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I will not now consider your little Essay, which arrived this morning; I wait till to-morrow. It coincides exactly with Elizabeth's sentiments on the subject, to whom I read it: indeed it has convinced her, although from my having a good deal to do to-day, I cannot listen to so full an exposition of her sentiments on the subject, as I would wish to send you. I shall write to you to-morrow on this matter; and if you clear up some doubts which yet remain, dissipate some hopes relative to the perfectibility of man generally considered, as well as individually, I will willingly submit to the system, which at present I cannot but strongly reprobate.

How can I find words to express my thanks for such generous conduct with regard to my sister with talents and attainments, such as you possess, to promise what I ought not perhaps to have required, what nothing but a dear sister's intellectual improvement could have induced me to demand. What can I say on the subject of your letter concerning Elizabeth? Is it not dictated by the most generous and disinterested of human motives? I have not shown it to her yet, I need not explain the reason. On this point you know all.

There is only one affair<sup>1</sup> of which I will make the least cloud of mystery; it is the only point on which I will be a solitary being! To be solitary, to be reserved in communicating pain, surely cannot be criminal; it cannot be contrary to the strictest duties of friendship.

She is gone! She is lost to me for ever! She married!<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Perhaps Shelley's love affair with Miss Grove.

<sup>2</sup> Hogg prints "She is married." Peacock suggests the above emendation, as Shelley probably alludes to Miss Harriet Grove's engagement to Mr. Heylar, for her marriage to him did not take place

Married to a clod of earth ; she will become as insensible herself ; all those fine capabilities will moulder !

Let us speak no more on the subject. Do not deprive me of the little remains of peace which yet linger ; that which arises from endeavours to make others happy !

The Poetry, which I sent you, alluded not to the subject of my nonsensical ravings. I hope that you are now publishing one of your tales. L[ongman ?] would do it as well as anyone ; if you do not choose to publish a book at Oxford, you can print it there ; and I will *engage* to dispose of five hundred copies. S[tockdale] professes to be acquainted with your family ; *hinc illæ lacrymæ !* I attempted to enlighten my father, *mirabile dictu !* He for a time listened to my arguments ; he allowed the impossibility (considered abstractedly) of any preternatural interferences by Providence. He allowed the utter incredibility of witches, ghosts, legendary miracles. But when I came to *apply* the truths, on which we had agreed so harmoniously, he started at the bare idea of some facts generally believed never having existed, and silenced me with an Equine argument, in effect with these words :—" I believe, because I do believe."

My mother imagines me to be in the high road to Pandemonium, she fancies I want to make a deistical coterie of all my little sisters : how laughable !

You must be very solitary at Oxford ; I wish I could come there now ; but for reasons, which I will tell you at meeting, it is delayed for a fortnight. I have a Poem<sup>1</sup> with

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until the autumn of 1811. On October 28 of that year he wrote from York to Charles Grove : " How do you like Mr. Heylar ? A new brother as well as a new cousin [Shelley's bride was the new cousin] must be an invaluable acquisition." Prof. Dowden's " Life of Shelley," Vol. I, p. 101.

<sup>1</sup> The poem to which Shelley alludes was apparently rejected by Messrs. Longman. It may afterwards have been published as " / A Poetical Essay / on the / Existing State of Things. / Quotation from ' The Curse of Kehama, ' / By a / Gentleman of the University of Oxford. / For assisting to maintain in Prison / Mr. Peter Finnerty, / Imprisoned for a Libel. / London : Sold by B. Crosby

Mr. L[ongman ?], which I shall certainly publish ; there is some of Elizabeth's in it. I will write to-morrow. I have something to add to it, and if L[ongman ?] has any idea when he speaks to you of publishing it with my name, will you tell him to leave it alone till I come ?

Yes ! the arms of Britannia victorious are bearing  
 Fame, triumph, and glory, wherever they speed,  
 Her Lion his crest o'er the nations is rearing.  
 Ruin follows, it tramples the dying and dead,  
 Thy countrymen fall, the blood-reeking bed  
 Of the battle-slain sends a complaint-breathing sigh,  
 It is mixed with the shoutings of Victory.  
 Old Ocean to shrieks of despair is resounding,  
 It washes the terror-struck nations with gore,  
 With Horror the fear-palsied earth is astounding,  
 And murmurs of fate fright the dread-convulsed shore.  
 The Andes in sympathy start at the roar,  
 Vast Ætna, alarmed, leans his flame-glowing brow,  
 And huge Teneriffe stoops with his pinnacled snow.  
 The ice mountains echo, the Baltic, the Ocean,  
 Where Cold sits enthroned on his column of snows,  
 Even Spitzbergen perceives the terrific commotion,  
 The roar floats on the whirlwind of sleet, as this blows  
 Blood tinges the streams as half-frozen they flow,  
 The meteors of war lurid flame thro' the air,  
 They mix their bright gleam with the red polar star.

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and Co., / and all other Booksellers. / 1811." / The late Mr. D. F. MacCarthy was the first to show that such a book by Shelley was actually published. Hitherto, no copy has come to light, but the book was advertised with the above title in the *Oxford Herald* of March 2, 1811, with the addition " Literature, Just Published, Price Two Shillings." In addition to Mr. MacCarthy's researches, Mr. W. M. Rossetti found a reference to the poem in a contemporary account of Shelley, in a letter from C. Kirkpatrick Sharpe dated from Christchurch, Oxford, March 15, 1811, included by Lady Charlotte Bury in her anonymous " Diary Illustrative of the Times of George the Fourth." 1838 (Vol. I, pp. 54-56). " We have lately had a literary sun shine forth upon us here, before whom our former luminaries must hide their diminished heads—a Mr. Shelley, of University College, who lives upon arsenic, aqua-fortis, half-an-hour's sleep in the night, and is desperately in love with the memory of Margaret Nicholson. He has published what he terms the Posthumous Poems, printed for the benefit of Mr. Peter Finnerty, which, I am grieved to say, though stuffed full of treason, is extremely dull, but the Author is a great genius, and if he be not clapped up in Bedlam or hanged, will certainly prove one of the sweetest swans on the tuneful margin of the Charwell. . . . Our Apollo next came



All are brethren, and even the African bending  
 To the stroke of the hard-hearted Englishman's rod,  
 The courtier at Luxury's palace attending,  
 The senator trembling at Tyranny's nod,  
 Each nation which kneels at the footstool of God  
 All are brethren—then banish distinction afar,  
 Let Concord and Love heal the miseries of War !<sup>1</sup>

out with a prose pamphlet in praise of Atheism, which I have not yet seen, and there appeared a monstrous romance in one volume, called 'St. Ircoyne [*sic*] or the Rosicrucian.' . . . Shelley's last exhibition is a 'Poem on the State of Public Affairs.'" Peter Finnerty (1766-1822) was born at Loughrea, Co. Galway, and during the Irish Rebellion in 1798 became printer of the *Dublin Press*. In connection with this journal he was indicted for a political libel, and although defended by Curran, was sentenced to imprisonment and his press and types were destroyed. On his release, he went to England and became a reporter on the *Morning Chronicle*. At the request of Sir Horne Popham, Finnerty accompanied the expedition to Walcheren for the avowed purpose of writing the history of the expedition, but on his arrival at that place, he was ordered to return to England. Smarting under what he considered an unjust exercise of authority, he addressed a letter in the *Morning Chronicle*, for Jan. 23, 1810, to Lord Castlereagh, whom Leigh Hunt says "he plainly accused of an intention to harass and destroy him, and reminded the Viscount of the tyrannous and horrible cruelties practised upon the people of Ireland during his administration in that country." On Feb. 7, 1811, Finnerty was brought up for judgment, and sentenced to eighteen months' imprisonment in Lincoln jail. Shelley was deeply interested in the case of Finnerty, and his name appears in the *Oxford Herald* for March 2, 1811, as a subscriber of one guinea to a fund for the unfortunate journalist, and he alludes to him in the "Address to the Irish People." The *Dublin Weekly Messenger* for March 7, 1812, after commenting on Shelley's speech at the Fishamble Theatre, says, "We have but one word more to add. Mr. Shelly [*sic*], commiserating the sufferings of our distinguished countryman, Mr. Peter Finnerty, whose exertions in the cause of political freedom he much admired, wrote a very beautiful poem, the profits of which we understand, from *undoubted* authority, Mr. Shelly remitted to Mr. Finnerty; we have heard they amounted to nearly a hundred pounds. This fact speaks a volume in favour of our new friend." It is interesting to note that both C. P. Sharpe in the above letter and H. Slatter in his note to Montgomery's "Oxford" state that the profits of "Margaret Nicholson" were to be devoted to Finnerty. Besides D. F. MacCarthy's "Shelley's Early Life," Mr. Forman's invaluable "Shelley Library" should be consulted for a full account of this poem.

<sup>1</sup> In a MS. copy of these verses with a different order of stanzas, and some variations of text, they are described as "Fragment of a Poem the original idea of which was suggested by the cowardly and infamous bombardment of Copenhagen."



These are Elizabeth's. She has written many more, and I will show you at some future time the whole of the composition. I like it very much, if a brother may be allowed to praise a sister. I will write to-morrow.

Yours with affection,

P. B. S.

Can you read this ?

### 23. TO JOHN JOSEPH STOCKDALE

(41 Pall Mall, London)

[FIELD PLACE, HORSHAM,]

January 11, 1811.

DEAR SIR,

I would thank you to send a copy of " St. Irvyne " to Miss Harriet Westbrook,<sup>1</sup> 10 Chapel Street, Grosvenor Square. In the course of a fortnight I shall do myself the pleasure of calling on you : with respect to the printer's bill,<sup>2</sup> I made him explain the distinction of the costs, which I hope are intelligible.

Do you find that the public are captivated by the title-page of " St. Irvyne " ?

Your sincere,

P. B. SHELLEY.

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<sup>1</sup> This is the first mention of Harriet Westbrook's name in Shelley's correspondence. The mistake in the number of her house, (it should be 23), seems to show that it was unfamiliar to him. Shelley's sisters were schoolfellows of Harriet Westbrook at Mrs. Fenning's school at Clapham. Charles H. Grove, writing in Hogg's " Shelley " (Vol. II, p. 552), shows that Shelley and Harriet Westbrook were already acquainted with one another. He says : " During the Christmas vacation of that year [1810], and in January, 1811, I spent part of it with Bysshe at Field Place, and when we returned to London, his sister Mary sent a letter of introduction with a present to her schoolfellow, Miss Westbrook, which Bysshe and I were to take to her. I recollect we did so, calling at Mr. Westbrook's house. I scarcely know how it came about, but from that time Bysshe corresponded with Miss Westbrook."

<sup>2</sup> Apparently for the printing of " Victor and Cazire." See note on p. 125, to Shelley's letter to Hogg, July 30, 1811.

24. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG  
(University College, Oxford)

FIELD PLACE [HORSHAM],

Jan[uary] 12, 1811.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Your letter with the extremely beautiful enclosed poetry came this morning. It is really admirable; it touches the heart; but I must be allowed to offer *one* critique upon it. You will be surprised to hear that I think it unfinished. You have not said that "the ivy, after it had destroyed the oak, as if to mock the miseries, which it caused, twined around a pine which stood near." It is true, therefore, but does not comprehend the whole truth. As to the stuff which I sent you, I write all my poetry of that kind from the feelings of the moment; if therefore it neither has allusion to the sentiments which rationally might be supposed to possess me, or to those which my situation might awaken, it is another proof of that egotizing variability, whilst I shudder to reflect how much I am in its power. To *you* I dare represent myself as I am: wretched to the last degree—sometimes one gleam of hope, one faint solitary gleam, seems to illumine the darkened prospect before me—but it has vanished. I fear it will never return. My sister will, I fear, never return the attachment which would once again bid me be calm. Yes! In this alone is my feeble anticipation of peace placed! But what am I? Am I not the most degraded of deceived enthusiasts? Do I not deceive myself? I never, never can feel peace again. What necessity is there for continuing in existence? But Heaven! Eternity! Love! My dear friend, I am yet a sceptic on these subjects; would that I could believe them to be, as they are represented; would that I could totally disbelieve them! But no! That would be selfish. I still have firmness enough to resist this last, this most horrible of errors. Is my despair the result of the hot, sickly love which inflames

the admirers of Sterne or Moore ?<sup>1</sup> It is the conviction of unmerited unkindness, the conviction that, should a future world exist, the object of my attachment would be as miserable as myself, is the cause of it.

I here take God (and a God exists) to witness, that I wish torments, which beggar the futile description of a fancied hell, would fall upon me ; provided I could obtain thereby that happiness for *what* I love, which, I fear, can never be ? The question is, what do I love ? It is almost unnecessary to answer. Do I love the person, the embodied identity, if I may be allowed the expression ? No ! I love what is superior, what is excellent, or what I conceive to be so ; and I wish, ardently wish, to be profoundly convinced of the existence of a Deity, that so superior a spirit might derive some degree of happiness from my feeble exertions ; for love is heaven, and heaven is love. You think so, too, and you disbelieve not the existence of an eternal, omnipresent Spirit. Am I not mad ? Alas ! I am, but I pour out my ravings into the ear of a friend who will pardon them. Stay ! I have an idea. I think I can prove the existence of a Deity—A First Cause. I will ask a materialist, how came this universe at first ? He will answer, By chance. What chance ? I will answer in the words of Spinoza : " An infinite number of atoms had been floating from all eternity in space, till at last one of them fortuitously diverged from its track, which, dragging with it another, formed the principle of gravitation, and in consequence the universe." What cause produced this change, this chance ? For where do we know that causes arise without their corresponding effects ; at least we must here, on so abstract a subject, reason analogically. Was not this then a *cause*, was it not a *first* cause ? Was not this first cause a Deity ? Now nothing remains but to prove that this Deity has a care, or rather that its

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. John Moore (1729-1802) physician, and the author of some books of travel and three novels :—"Zeluco" (1786), "Edward" (1796) and "Mordaunt" (1800).

only employment consists in regulating the present and future happiness of its creation. Our ideas of infinite space, etc., are scarcely to be called ideas, for we cannot either comprehend or explain them; therefore the Deity must be judged by us from attributes analogical to our situation. Oh, that this Deity were the soul of the universe, the spirit of universal, imperishable love! Indeed I believe it is: but now to your argument of the necessity of Christianity. I am not sure that your argument does not tend to prove its unreality. If it does not, you allow, you say, that love is the only true source of rational happiness: *one* man is capable of it, why not all?

The callibility [*sic*] of man preterite, I allow, but because men are, and have been callible, [*sic*] I see no reason why they should always continue so. Have there not been fluctuations in the opinions of mankind; and as the *stuff* which soul is made of must be in every one the same, would not an extended system of rational and moral unprejudiced education render each individual capable of experiencing that degree of happiness to which each ought to aspire, more for others than self? Hideous, hated traits of Superstition. Oh! Bigots, how I abhor your influence; they are all bad enough—but do we not see Fanaticism decaying? is not its influence weakened, except where Faber,<sup>1</sup> Rowland Hill,<sup>2</sup> and several others of the Armageddon heroes maintain their posts with all the obstinacy

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<sup>1</sup> George Stanley Faber (1773-1854) was scholar of University College, Oxford, 1790, and Fellow of Lincoln, 1793. From 1805 to 1808 he was Vicar of Stockton-upon-Tees, some two miles from Norton, where the Hoggs lived. He was probably a friend of Hogg's father, and may have suggested University as the college for his son. The author of several controversial works, "The Origin of Pagan Idolatry," 1816, a "prescientific" work, is cited by the "Dictionary of National Biography" as characteristic. It is evident that Shelley corresponded with Faber, and that the "F—" which occurs in many of his letters stands for his name.

<sup>2</sup> Rowland Hill (1744-1833), an evangelical preacher, the author of "Village Dialogues," 1810, and some hymns; not to be confused with Sir Rowland Hill, of penny-postage fame.



of long-established dogmatism? How I pity them; how I despise, hate them! S[tockdale] knows Mr. D. would publish your tale. I am beyond measure anxious for its appearance. Adieu! Excuse my mad arguments; they are none at all, for I am rather confused, and fear, in consequence of a fever, they will not allow me to come on the 26th, but I will. Adieu!

Your affectionate friend,

P. B. S.

You can inclose to Timothy Shelley, Esq., M.P.

25. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG

(University College, Oxford)

Jan[uary] 14, 1811.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Your letter and that of W——.<sup>1</sup> came to-day; yours is excellent, and, I think, will fully (in his own mind) convince Mr. W——. I inclosed five sheets of paper full this morning, and sent them to the coach with yours. I sate up all night to finish them; they attack his hypothesis in its very basis, which, at some future time, I will explain to you; and I have attempted to prove, from the *existence* of a Deity and a Revelation, the futility of the superstition upon which he founds his whole scheme.

I am sorry to see that you even remotely suspected me of being offended with you. How I wish that I could persuade you that it is impossible! I am really sleepy; could you suppose that I should be so apathetic as *ever* to sleep again till my last slumber? But it is so, and I shall take a walk in St. Leonard's Forest to dissipate it. Adieu! You shall hear from me to-morrow.

Your sincere friend,

P. B. S.

Stockdale has behaved infamously to me; he has abused

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<sup>1</sup> See pp. 20, 31, 34.

the confidence I reposed in him in sending him my work ;<sup>1</sup> and he has made very free with your character, of which he knows nothing, with my father. I shall call on Stockdale on my way<sup>2</sup> that he may explain. May I expect to see your Tale printed ?

26. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG  
(Oxford)

FIELD PLACE [HORSHAM],  
Jan[uary] 16, 1811.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

You will hear from me to-morrow. I have, to-day, scarcely time but to tell you that I do not forget you. You tell me that it will show greatness of soul to rise after such a fall as mine. Ah ! what pain must I feel when I contradict the flattering view which you have taken of my character. Do I not know myself ? Do I not feel the acutest poignancy of mortification amounting to actual misery ? Alas ! I must, with Godwin, say that in man, imperfect as he now exists, there is never a motive for action unmixed ; that the best has its alloy, the worst is commingled with virtue. What does my mortification arise from ? Surely not wholly for myself, not wholly for the happiness of the being whom I have lost. Did I know, were I convinced, that I felt for nothing but Her, no self-reproach would tell me that my pangs were disgraceful. But now, when I fear, when I feel, that, in spite of myself, regret for the high happiness which I have lost is mingled with the other consideration, do I feel, too, that it is disgraceful, degrading ! Adieu ! I will write to-morrow.

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<sup>1</sup> Possibly "The Necessity of Atheism."

<sup>2</sup> To Oxford.

27. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG  
(University College, Oxford)

FIELD PLACE [HORSHAM],  
January 17, 1811.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I shall be with you as soon as possible next week. You really were at Hungerford, whether you knew it or not. You tell me nothing about the tale which you promised me. I hope it gets on in the press, I am anxious for its appearance. Stockdale certainly behaved in a vile manner to me,<sup>1</sup> no other bookseller would have violated the confidence reposed in him. I will talk to him in London, where I shall be on Tuesday. Can I do anything for you there?

You notice the peculiarity of the expression "My Sister" in my letters. It certainly arose independent of consideration, and I am happy to hear that it is so.

Your systematic cudgel for blockheads is excellent. I tried it on with my father, who told me that thirty years ago he had read Locke, but this made no impression. The "*equus et res*" are all that I can boast of; the "*pater*" is swallowed up in the first article of the catalogue. You tell me nothing of the tale; I am all anxiety about it. I am forced hastily to bid you adieu.

28. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG  
(Oxford)

FIELD PLACE [HORSHAM],  
[No date.]

[January 23, 1811?]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

You are all over the country. I shall be at Oxford on Friday or Saturday evening. I will write to you from London. My father's prophetic prepossession in your favour is become as high as before it was to your prejudice. Whence it arises, or from what cause, I am inadequate to

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<sup>1</sup> See note on p. 47.

say ; I can merely state the fact. He came from London full of your praises ; your family, that of Mr. Hogg, of Norton House, near Stockton-upon-Tees. Your principles are *now* as divine as before they were diabolical. I tell you this with extreme satisfaction, and, to sum up the whole, he has desired me to make his compliments to you and to invite you to make Field Place your head-quarters for the Easter vacation. I hope you will accept of it. I fancy he has been talking in town to some of the northern Members of Parliament who are acquainted with your family. However that may be, I hope you have no other arrangement for Easter which can interfere with granting me the pleasure of introducing you personally here.

You have very well drawn your line of distinction between instinctive and rational motives of action ; the *former* are not in our own power, yet we may doubt if even these are *purely* selfish, as congeniality, sympathy, unaccountable attractions of intellect, which arise independent frequently of any considerations of your own interest, operating violently in contradiction to it, and bringing on wretchedness, which your reason plainly foresees, which yet, although your judgment disapproves of, you take no pains to obviate. All this is not selfish. And surely the operations of reason, of judgment, in a man whose judgment is fully convinced of the baseness of any motive, can never be consonant with it.

Adieu ! Your affectionate.

29. JOHN JOSEPH STOCKDALE

(41 Pall Mall, London)

[UNIVERSITY COLLEGE], OXFORD,

28th of January, 1811.

SIR,

On my arrival at Oxford my friend Mr. Hogg communicated to me the letters which passed in consequence of your misrepresentations of his character, the abuse of that



confidence which he invariably reposed in you.<sup>1</sup> I now, Sir, desire to know whether you mean the evasions in your first letter to Mr. Hogg, your insulting *attempt* at coolness in your second, as a method of escaping *safely* from the opprobrium naturally attached to so ungentlemanlike an abuse of confidence (to say nothing of misrepresentations) as that which my father communicated to me; or as a *denial* of the fact of having acted in this unprecedented, this *scandalous* manner. If the former be your intention I will compassionate your cowardice, and my friend pitying your *weakness* will take no further notice of your contemptible *attempts* at calumny. If the latter is your intention, I feel it my duty to declare, as my veracity and that of my father is thereby called in question, that I will never be satisfied, despicable as I may consider the author of that affront, until my friend has ample apology for the injury which you have *attempted* to do him. I expect an immediate, and demand a satisfactory letter.

Sir, I am,

Your obedient humble servant,

PERCY B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside.]

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<sup>1</sup> Stockdale had represented to Shelley's father, apparently with good intentions, that his son's scepticism was due to Hogg's influence, and Shelley had repeated the bookseller's apprehension to his friend. Whereupon Hogg addressed in succession two letters, couched in violent language, to the unfortunate Stockdale. In the first letter, dated from Oxford, Jan. 21, 1811, Hogg says: "The bare mention of the MS., with which I entrusted you, to anyone was an unparalleled breach of confidence. There have been instances of booksellers who have honourably refused to betray the authors whose works they have published altho' actions were brought against them. I believe that one gentleman had honour enough to submit to the pillory rather than disgrace himself by giving up the name of one who had confided in him, however unworthy he might be of such generous treatment." The MS. referred to here was suggested by Mr. MacCarthy to be that of Shelley's "Necessity of Atheism"; and Peter Finnerty was the gentleman who submitted to the ordeal of the pillory.

## 30. TO EDWARD FERGUS GRAHAM

(Fragment)

I do not wish or desire you to accuse yourself to my father, nor when he speaks to me will I any longer suffer him to continue in that opinion or error. As to Stockdale, I have a bad opinion of him. . . I have some hopes from *our Poetry*, more of which I send you. . . The enclosed Poetry is to be added to the rest to go to Longmans.<sup>1</sup> Ask £20,000,000 for them.

## 31. TO EDWARD FERGUS GRAHAM

(Vine Street, London)

February 13, 1811.

DEAR GRAHAM,

I send you a book,<sup>2</sup> you must be particularly intent about it. Cut out the title-page, and advertise it in eight famous papers; and in the *Globe*, advertise the *advertisement* in the third page. I wish you to be particularly quick about it. I will write more to-morrow. Now can only say silence and despatch.

Your friend,

PERCY SHELLEY.

ED. GRAHAM, Esq.,  
Vine Street, Piccadilly, London.

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 18, 36, 78.

<sup>2</sup> "The Necessity of Atheism." I have found the record of a letter addressed by Shelley to Graham in 1811, but with no more definite date, which evidently was written shortly after the above, in which he says: "You need not advertise the Atheism, as it is not yet published, we are afraid of the Legislature's power with respect to Heretics." . . . An advertisement of this pamphlet, however, had already appeared in the *Oxford Herald* of February 9th.

"Speedily will be published,

"To be had of the Booksellers of London and Oxford, with the title of the pamphlet (but without the imprint), which is as follows—

'The/Necessity of Atheism./ Quod clarâ et perspicuâ demonstratione careat / pro vero habere / mens omnino nequis humana. / Bacon de Augment Scient. / Worthing: / Printed by C. & W. Phillips. / Sold in London and Oxford.'"

Hogg describes the origin of this pamphlet. Shelley had a passion

## 32. TO LEIGH HUNT

(As Editor of *The Examiner*)

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, OXFORD,

March 2, 1811.

SIR,

Permit me, although a stranger, to offer my sincerest congratulations on the occasion of that triumph,<sup>1</sup> so

for controversial discussion, not only with his friends, but frequently with correspondents, as often as not personally unknown to him. In order "to facilitate his epistolary disquisitions, he printed a short abstract of some of the doctrines of Hume. It was a small pill, but it worked powerfully; the mode of operation was this:—He enclosed a copy in a letter, and sent it by the post, stating with modesty and simplicity, that he had met accidentally with the little tract, which appeared unhappily to be quite unanswerable. Unless the fish was too sluggish to take the bait, an answer of refutation was forwarded to an appointed address in London, and then in a vigorous reply he would fall upon the unwary disputant and break his bones. The strenuous attack sometimes provoked a rejoinder more carefully prepared, and an animated and protracted debate ensued; the party cited, having put in his answer, was fairly in court, and he might get out of it as he could."—"Life of Shelley, Vol. I, p. 272 Henry Slatter, writing in the fourth edition of Robert Montgomery's "Oxford," says that Shelley himself strewed the shop windows and counters of Munday and Slatter, his booksellers in Oxford, unknown to them, with copies of "The Necessity of Atheism," and gave instructions to their shopman to sell them as fast as he could at the charge of sixpence each. Shortly afterwards, a judicious friend of the booksellers (the Rev. John Walker, B.C.L., Fellow of New College) dropped in, and was attracted by the novelty of the title to examine the contents of the pamphlet. He at once inveighed against the dangerous tendency of the pamphlet, and at his advice, the copies were immediately burned, in the gentleman's presence, in the back kitchen. Shelley informed Munday and Slatter that he had sent a copy of his pamphlet to every bishop in the kingdom, to the Vice-Chancellor, and the heads of houses in Oxford, and other dignitaries, addressing them under the fictitious signature of "Jeremiah Stukeley." The same bookseller sent "a friendly hint" to the Worthing printers of "The Necessity of Atheism," "warning them of the dangerous tendency of disseminating such vile principles, and the liability they ran of a prosecution by the Attorney-General, at the same time advising the destruction of every remaining copy, together with the MS. copy, types, etc." Mr. Slatter, however, preserved a copy of the pamphlet for his own use, and it is now in the collection of Mr. Thomas J. Wise.

<sup>1</sup> "An article which had appeared in the *Examiner* for Feb. 24,



highly to be prized by men of liberality ; permit me also to submit to your consideration, as one of the most fearless enlighteners of the public mind at the present time, a scheme of mutual safety, and mutual indemnification for men of public spirit and principle, which if carried into effect, would evidently be productive of incalculable advantages : of the scheme the following is an address to the public, the proposal for a meeting, and shall be modified according to your judgment, if you will do me the honour to consider the point.

The ultimate intention of my aim is to induce a meeting of such enlightened and unprejudiced members of the community, whose independent principles expose them to evils which might thus become alleviated ; and to form a methodical society, which should be organized so as to resist the coalition of the enemies of liberty, which at present renders any expression of opinion on matters of policy dangerous to individuals. It has been for want of societies of this nature, that corruption has attained the height at which we now behold it ; nor can any of us bear in mind the very great influence, which some years since was gained by *Illuminism*, without considering that a society of equal extent might establish national liberty on as firm a basis as that which would have supported the visionary schemes of a completely equalized community.

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1811, on the savagery of military floggings with the title 'One Thousand Lashes,' reprinted from a provincial journal, had attracted the attention of the Attorney-General, and a criminal information for seditious libel was filed against Leigh and John Hunt." The case was heard before Lord Ellenborough, who exhorted the jury to convict, but the defendants were ably supported by Brougham, who obtained for them a verdict of "Not guilty." This made the third government prosecution against the *Examiner* that had failed. Professor Dowden, whose note on this letter in his "Life of Shelley" (I, 112) I have used, says that Shelley had read, probably in the Abbé Barruel's "Mémoires pour Servir à l'Histoire du Jacobinisme," "how Spartacus Weishaupt founded the Society of Illuminists, not so many years ago, for the defence and propagation of free thought and revolutionary principles ; he remembered how formidable that society had grown."



Although perfectly unacquainted with you privately, I address you as a common friend to *liberty*, thinking that in cases of this urgency and importance, etiquette ought not to stand in the way of usefulness.

My father is in parliament, and on attaining twenty-one, I shall in all probability fill his vacant seat. On account of the responsibility, to which my residence in the University subjects me, I, of course, dare not publicly avow all I think, but the time will come when I hope that my every endeavour, insufficient as this may be, will be directed to the advancement of liberty.

I remain, sir,

Your most obedient servant,

P. B. SHELLEY.

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## II. POLAND STREET AND FIELD PLACE

April 5—July 4, 1811

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SHELLEY and Hogg expelled from Oxford—Their residence in Poland Street—Correspondence with Hogg—Harriet Westbrook—Rev. G. S. Faber—Shelley's allowance—Poems by Janetta Philipps—Elizabeth Shelley—Eliza Hitchener—The Prince Regent's *fête*—Miss Owenson's "Missionary."

### 33. TO TIMOTHY SHELLEY<sup>1</sup>

[15] POLAND STREET [LONDON],

[After April 5, 1811.]

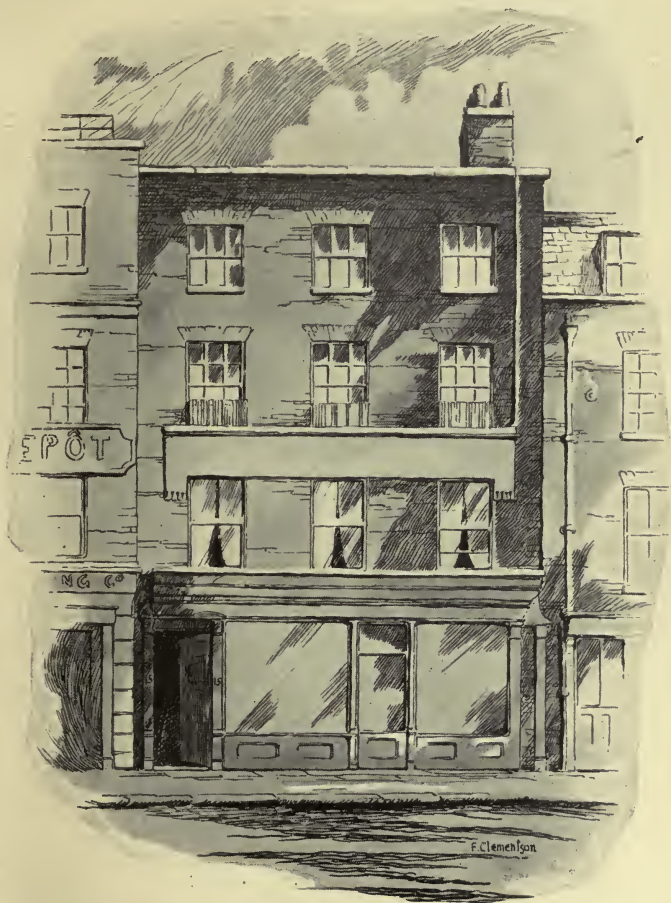
MY DEAR FATHER,

As you do me the honour of requesting to hear the determination of my mind as the basis of your future actions, I feel it my duty, although it gives me pain to wound "the sense of duty to your own character, to that of your family, and your feelings as a Christian," decidedly to refuse my assent to both the proposals in your letter,<sup>2</sup> and to affirm that similar refusals will always be the fate

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<sup>1</sup> The expulsion of Shelley and Hogg from Oxford took place on March 25th, 1811, and at 8 o'clock on the morning of the following day they left the University city on the top of a coach for London. The same night they spent at a coffee house near Piccadilly. On March 28 they found some lodgings in Poland Street, off the Oxford Road (now Oxford Street), which appealed to Shelley because they reminded him of Miss Jane Porter's novel "Thaddeus of Warsaw," and of freedom.

<sup>2</sup> Of April 5, 1811, in which he requested that Shelley should instantly return to Field Place, put himself under a tutor of his (Mr. Timothy Shelley's) choice, and break off all relations with his friend Hogg.



*From a drawing by F. Clementson*

15 POLAND STREET, LONDON





of similar requests. With many thanks for your great kindness,

I remain your affectionate dutiful son,  
PERCY B. SHELLEY.

#### 34. TO JOHN HOGG

15 POLAND STREET [LONDON],

[April, 1811.]

SIR,

I accompanied (at his desire) Mr. Jefferson Hogg to Mr. C., who was intrusted with certain propositions to be offered to my friend. I was there extremely surprised; no less hurt than surprised, to find my father in his interview with Mr. C. had, either unadvisedly or intentionally, let fall expressions which conveyed an idea that Mr. Jefferson Hogg was the "original corruptor" of my principles.<sup>1</sup> That on this subject (notwithstanding his long experience) Mr. T. Shelley must know less than his son, will be conceded; and I feel it but justice, in consequence of your feelings, so natural, [? after] what Mr. C. communicated, positively to deny the assertion; I feel this tribute, which I have paid to the just sense of horror you entertain, to be due to you as a gentleman. I hope my motives stand excused to your candour.

Myself and my friend have offered concessions; painful, indeed, they are to myself, but such as on mature consideration we find due to our high sense of filial duty.

Permit me to request your indulgence for the liberty I have taken in thus addressing you.

I remain your obedient humble servant,

P. B. SHELLEY.

TO JOHN HOGG, Esq.

<sup>1</sup> In connexion with this letter, Hogg said that he "did not believe that Mr. T. Shelley ever let fall the expressions that were imputed to him." Yet Mr. Shelley addressed a letter to Hogg on March 27, 1811, two days after his expulsion, saying that he could not receive him at Field Place for the Easter Vacation in accordance with his son's invitation.—("Life of Shelley," Vol. I, pp. 311, 329.

35. TO J. SLATTER<sup>1</sup>

(London)

[15 POLAND STREET, LONDON,

Postmark] April 16, 1811.

SIR,

Directly I get my affairs a little settled, I will send you the £20 you were so kind as to lend me.—I have not yet heard from Munday, suppose I shall soon.

Directly the trunks come I will send Mr. B.'s writings.

Y[ou]r obliged Ser[v]ant,

P. B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],

MR. SLATTER,

At the upholsterer's,

Corner of Sloane Street.

[Knightsbridge, London.]

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<sup>1</sup> In the notes to Robert Montgomery's "Oxford" quoted above, Henry Slatter says that when Shelley was expelled from Oxford, having no money whatever, he "went to the house where his father had lodged when he brought him to Oxford, and obtained the loan of £20 to enable him to pay his travelling expenses to London, leaving a written memorandum of his having borrowed it, but which, to this hour, has never been redeemed." Mr. J. Slatter, coming to London shortly after Shelley left Oxford, called at Shelley's lodgings, and not finding the poet at home, left a note requesting him to repay the money he had had, to which application Shelley sent the above note. "Mr. B.'s writings" were probably "the large historical and political work relative to Sweden," for the printing of which, Mr. Slatter says, Shelley had made himself responsible. The work was by a literary character of the name of Browne or Bird, who having sought Shelley's aid in bringing it out, a purchase of the copyright was agreed upon. Shelley managed to raise £600 on the security of his printers, and as he failed to repay this sum, they were ultimately called upon to settle both principal and interest. "The printing, however, of the work was not far proceeded with, although new type was laid down and paper bought, Shelley having left Oxford so suddenly, without making any provision for its printing, other than by placing a part of the MS. in the printer's hands, with a promise of sending the remainder and of rendering justice to them by taking on himself all the responsibility for the money raised on his account, for the purchase of the work, and also

## 36. TO JOHN JOSEPH STOCKDALE

(41 Pall Mall, London)

15 POLAND STREET, OXFORD STREET [LONDON],

April 11, 1811.

SIR,

Will you have the goodness to inform me of the number of copies which you have sold of "St. Irvyne."<sup>1</sup> Circumstances may occur which will oblige me, in case of their event, to wish for my accounts suddenly, perhaps you had better make them out.

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

P. B. SHELLEY.

## 37. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG

(Ellesmere)

[15] POLAND STREET [LONDON],

April 18, 1811.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Certainly this place is a little solitary,<sup>2</sup> but as a person cannot be quite alone when he has even got himself with him, I get on pretty well. I have employed myself in writing poetry, and as I go to bed at eight o'clock, time passes quicker than it otherwise might.

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the risk in printing and publishing, the moment he had it in his power—thus becoming a patron at the expense of others, and almost to the entire ruin at that time of the printers and their families! That it was his intention at the time of entering into the engagement, none who knew him could have doubted; but his prospects suddenly changed, and with them almost the recollection, apparently, of his having been at Oxford, faded also from his memory."

<sup>1</sup> "St. Irvyne," it will be remembered, was published at Shelley's expense.

<sup>2</sup> Hogg tells us ("Life of Shelley," Vol. I, p. 334) that after spending a month with Shelley in London, he left him, and with a college friend, proceeded to Ellesmere, in Shropshire, to spend a short holiday before settling down to his legal training at York.

Yesterday I had a letter from Whitton<sup>1</sup> to invite me to his house ; of course the answer was negative. I wrote to say that I would resign all claim to the entail if he<sup>2</sup> would allow me two hundred pounds a year, and divide the rest among my sisters. Of course he will not refuse the offer. You remarked that, in Lord Mount Edgecombe's hermitage, I should have nothing to talk of but myself ; nor have I anything here, except I should transcribe the *jeux-d'esprit* of the maid.

Mr. Pilfold<sup>3</sup> has written a very civil letter ; my mother intercepted that—sent to my father,<sup>4</sup> and wrote to me to come, inclosing the money. I, of course, returned it.

Miss Westbrook has this moment called on me, with her sister. It certainly was very kind of her. Adieu !

The post goes.

Yours,  
P. B. S.

38. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG  
(Ellesmere)

LONDON,

April 24, 1811.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

You have, with wonderful sagacity, no doubt, refuted an argument of mine, the very existence of which I had

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Timothy Shelley's solicitor.

<sup>2</sup> That is, Shelley's father.

<sup>3</sup> Shelley's maternal uncle, Captain John Pilfold, who desired to reconcile Shelley with his father. He had fought with Nelson in the battle of the Nile, and had commanded a frigate at Trafalgar. He now lived with his wife and children at Cuckfield, a distance of about ten miles from Field Place. (Prof. Dowden's "Life of Shelley," Vol. I, p. 152.) In a letter dated Jan. 6, 1814, printed on p. 397 of this volume, Captain Pilfold wrote from Nelson Hall, Lindfield, which is not far from Cuckfield.

<sup>4</sup> The intercepted letter was evidently No. 33, which Mrs. Shelley may have thought was not calculated to improve the relations between Shelley and his father.



forgotten. Something singularly conceited, no doubt, by the remarks you make on it. Fine flowery language, you say ; well, I cannot help it ; you see me in my weakest moments. All I can tell you of it is, that I certainly was not laughing, as you conjecture. This circumstance may go against me. I do not know that it will, however, as I have by no means a *precise* idea of what the subject of this composition was.

“The Galilean is not a favourite of mine,” a French author writes. The French write audaciously—rashly. “So far from owing him any thanks for his favours, I cannot avoid confessing that I owe a secret grudge to his carpenter-ship—*charpenterie*. The reflecting part of the community, that part in whose happiness we philosophers have so strong an interest—certainly do not require his morality, which, where there is no *vice*, fetters *virtue*. Here we all agree. Let this horrid Galilean rule the *Canaille* then ! I give them up.” And I give them up ; I will no more mix politics and virtue, they are incompatible.

My little friend Harriet W[estbrook] is gone to her prison-house.<sup>1</sup> She is quite well in health ; at least so she says, though she looks very much otherwise. I saw her yesterday. I went with her [? and her] sister<sup>2</sup> to Miss H[awkes’ ?] and walked about Clapham Common with them for two hours. The youngest is a most amiable girl ; the eldest is really conceited, but very condescending. I took the sacrament with her on Sunday. You say, I talk philosophically of her kindness in calling on me. She<sup>3</sup> is very charitable and good. I shall always think of it with gratitude, because I certainly did not deserve it, and she exposed herself to much possible odium. It is, perhaps, scarcely doing her a kindness—it is, perhaps, inducing

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<sup>1</sup> The school at Clapham Common, originally kept by Mrs. Fenning, but afterwards by Miss Hawkes.

<sup>2</sup> Eliza Westbrook.

<sup>3</sup> That is, Harriet Westbrook.

positive unhappiness—to point out to her a road which leads to perfection, the attainment of which, perhaps, does not repay the difficulties of the progress. What do you think of this? If trains of thought, development of mental energies influence in any degree a future state; if this is *even* possible—if it stands on *at all* securer ground than mere hypothesis; then is it not a service? Where am I gotten? perhaps into another ridiculous argument. I will not proceed, for I shall forget all I have said, and cannot, in justice, animadvert upon any of your critiques.

I called on John Grove this morning.<sup>1</sup> I met my father in the passage, and politely inquired after his health. He looked as black as a thunder-cloud, and said, “Your most humble servant!” I made him a low bow, and wishing him a very good morning—passed on. He is very irate about my proposals. I cannot resign anything till I am twenty-one. I cannot do anything, therefore I have three more years to consider of the matter you mentioned. I shall go down to Field Place soon. I wait for Mr. Pilford’s arrival, with whom I shall depart. He is resolved (the old fellow) that I shall not stay at Field Place. If I please—as I shall do for some time—I *will*. This resolution of mine was hinted to him: “Oh! then I shall take his sister away before he comes.” But I shall follow her, as her retirement cannot be a secret. This will probably lead me to wander about for some time. You will hear from me, however, wherever I am. If all these things are useless, you will see me at York, or at Ellesmere, if you still remain there. The scenery excites mournful ideas. I am sorry to hear it; I hoped that it would have had a contrary effect. May I indulge the idea that York is as stupid as Oxford. And yet you did not wander alone amid the mountains? I think I shall live at the foot of

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<sup>1</sup> At Lincoln’s Inn Fields. Shelley’s cousin, John Grove, the surgeon, states that all Bysshe’s letters to him were destroyed, when he left London for Edinburgh, presumably for his medical studies.

Snowdon. Suppose we both go there directly? Do not be surprised if you see me at Ellesmere. Yes, you would, for it would be a strange thing. I am now nearly recovered. Strange that Florian could not see the conclusions from his own reasoning. How can the hope of a higher reward stimulating an action make it virtuous, if the essence of virtue is disinterested, as all who know anything of virtue must allow, as *he* does allow. How inconsistent is this religion! How apt to pervert the judgment, and finally the heart of the most amiably-intentioned who confide in it! I wish I was with you in the mountains; could not we live there?

Direct to 15 Poland Street. I write to-morrow to York.

Your affectionate friend,

P. B. S.

Your B——<sup>1</sup> is worse than stupid; he is provoking. Have you really no one to associate with—not even a peasant, a child of nature, a spider? And this from the hermit, the philosopher? Oh, you are right to laugh at me. I finished the little poem, one stanza of which you said was pretty; it is, on the whole, a most stupid thing, as you will confess, when I some day inflict a perusal of it on your innocent ears. Yet I have nothing to amuse myself with, and if it does not injure others and you cannot avoid it, I do not see much harm in being mad.

You even vindicate it in some almost inspired stanzas, which I found among my transcriptions to-day.

Adieu! I am going to Miss W[estbrook]'s to dinner. Her father is out. I will write to-morrow.

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<sup>1</sup> This may have been the college friend with whom Hogg left London for Ellesmere, possibly the Burdon mentioned elsewhere in Shelley's correspondence.

## 39. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG

(York)

15 POLAND STREET [LONDON].

April 26, 1811.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I indulge despair. *Why* do I so? I will not philosophize; it is, perhaps, a poor way of administering comfort to myself to say that I *ought* not to be in need of it. I fear the despair which springs from disappointed love is a passion—a passion, too, which is least of all reducible to reason. But it is a passion, it is independent of volition; it is the necessary effect of a cause, which *must*, I feel, continue to operate. Wherefore, then, do you ask, *Why* I indulge despair? And what shall I tell you, which can make you happier, which can alleviate even solitude and regret. Shall I tell you the truth? Oh, you are too well aware of that, or you would not talk of despair. Shall I say that the time may come when happiness shall dawn upon a night of wretchedness? Why should I be a false prophet, if I said this? I do not know, except on the general principle that the evils in this world powerfully overbalance its pleasures; how, then, could I be justified in saying this? You will tell me to cease to think, to cease to feel; you will tell me to be anything but what I am; and I fear I must obey the command before I can talk of hope.

I find there can be bigots in philosophy as well as in religion; I, perhaps, may be classed with the former. I *have* read your letter attentively. Yet *all* religionists *do* judge of philosophers in the way which you reprehend; *faith* is one of the highest moral virtues—the foundation, indeed, upon which all others must rest; and religionists think that he who has neglected to *cultivate* this has not performed *one-third* of the moral duties, as Bishop Warburton dogmatically asserts. The religionists, then, by this very *Faith*, without which they could not be religionists, think the most virtuous philosopher must have neglected one-third of the moral duties.



If, then, a religionist, the *most* amiable of them, regards the best philosopher as *far* from being virtuous, has not a philosopher reason to suspect the amiability of a system which inculcates so glaringly uncharitable opinions? Can a being, amiable to a high degree, possessed, of course, of judgment, without which amiability would be in a poor way, hold such opinions as these? Supposing even they were supported by reason, they ought to be suspected as leading to a conclusion *ad absurdum*; since, however, they combine irrationality and absurdity with effects on the mind most opposite to retiring amiability, are they not to be *more* than suspected? Take any system of religion, lop off all the disgusting excrescences, or rather adjuncts, retain virtuous precepts, qualify selfish dogmas (I would even allow as much irrationality as amiability could swallow, but uncombined with immorality and self-conceitedness); do all this, and I will say it is a system which *can* do no harm, and, indeed, is highly requisite for the vulgar. But perhaps it is best for the latter that they should have it as their fathers gave it them; that the amiable, the inquiring should reject it altogether.

Yet I will allow that it *may* be consistent with amiability, when amiability does not know the deformity of the wretched errors, and that they *really* are as we behold them. I cannot judge of a system by the flowers which are scattered here and there; you omit the mention of the *weeds*, which grow so high that few botanists can see the flowers; and those who *do* gather the latter are frequently, I fear, tainted with the pestilential vapour of the former.

The argument of *supremacy* is really amiable, without that I should give up the remotest *possibility* of success. Yet that applies but to the existence of a *Creator*, that is inconsequential: the inquirer here, the amiable inquirer, does not pause at the world, lest *she* should be left supreme; she advances *one* step higher, not being aware, or not caring to be aware, of the infinity of the staircase which she ascends. This is *irrational*, but it is not unamiable,—it does not

involve the hateful consequences of selfishness, self-conceitedness, and the subserviency of faith to the volition of the believer, which are necessary to the existence of "a spurious system of theology."

A *religionist*, I will allow, may be more amiable than a philosopher, although in one instance reason is allowed to sleep, that amiability may watch. Yet, my dear friend, this is not Intolerance, nor can that odious system stand excused on this ground, as its very principle revolts against the dear modesty which suggests a dereliction of reason in the other instance. I again assert—nor, perhaps, are you prepared to deny, much as your amiable motive might prompt you to wish it—that religion is too often the child of cold prejudice and selfish fear. Love of a Deity, of Allah, Bramah (it is all the same), certainly springs from the latter motive; is this *love*? You know too well, it is not. Here I appeal to your own heart, your own feelings. At that tribunal I feel that I am secure. I once could almost *tolerate* intolerance,—it then merely injured me once; it merely deprived *me* of all that I cared for, touching myself, on earth; but now it has done more, and I cannot forgive.

Eloisa said, "I have hated myself, that I might love thee, Abelard." When I hear a religionist prepared to say so, as her sincere sentiments, I then will allow that in a *few* instances the virtue of religion is separable from the vice.

She is *not* lost for ever!<sup>1</sup> How I hope that may be true; but I fear *I* can never ascertain, I can never influence an amelioration, as she does not any longer permit a "*philosopher*" to correspond with her. She talks of duty to her *Father*. And this is your amiable religion!

You will excuse my raving; my dear friend; you will not be severe upon my hatred of a cause which can produce such an effect as this. You talk of the dead; do we not exist after the tomb? It is a natural question, my friend,

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<sup>1</sup> This seems to relate to Miss Harriet Grove.

when there is nothing in life : yet it is one on which you have never told me any *solid* grounds for your opinions.

You shall hear from me again soon. I send some verses. I heard from F.<sup>1</sup> yesterday. All that he said was : My letters are arrived.—G. S. F.

My dear friend, your affectionate,

P. B. SHELLEY.

T. J. HOGG, Post Office, York.

#### 40. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG

(Ellesmere)

LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS [LONDON],

April 28, 1811.

I am now at Grove's. I don't know where I am, where I will be. Future, present, past, is all a mist ; it seems as if I had begun existence anew, under auspices so unfavourable. Yet no ! That is stupid ! My poor little friend<sup>2</sup> has been ill, her sister sent for me the other night. I found her on a couch pale ; her father is civil to me, verystrangely ; the sister is too civil by half. She began talking about *l'Amour*. I philosophized, and the youngest said she had such a headache, that she could not bear conversation. Her sister then went away, and I stayed till half-past twelve. Her father had a large party below, he invited me ; I refused. Yes ! The fiend, the wretch, shall fall ! Harriet will do for one of the crushers, and the eldest (Emily),<sup>3</sup> with some taming, will do, too. They are both very clever, and the youngest (my friend) is amiable. Yesterday she was better, to-day her father compelled her to go to Clapham, whither I have conducted her, and I am now returned. Why is it, that the moment we two<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rev. G. S. Faber. See note on p. 42.

<sup>2</sup> Harriet Westbrook.

<sup>3</sup> The eldest Miss Westbrook was generally known as " Eliza " ; this may be a slip of the pen, or she may have possessed both names. She was nearly twice the age of her sister Harriet, at this date.

<sup>4</sup> By " we two," Shelley seems to mean Hogg and himself.

are separated, I can scarcely set bounds to my hatred of intolerance ; is it feeling ? is it passion ? I would willingly persuade myself that it is neither ; willingly would I persuade myself that all that is amiable, all that is good, falls by its prevalence, and that *I* ought unceasingly to attempt its destruction. Yet, you say that millions of bad are necessary for the existence of a few pre-eminent in excellence. Is not this a despotism of virtue, which is inconsistent with its nature ? Is it not the Asiatic tyrant who renders his territory wretched to fill his seraglio ? the shark, who must glut his maw with millions of fish, in order that he may exist ? I have often said that I doubted your divinities, and if this interference follows the established hypothesis of their existence, I do not merely doubt, but hope that my doubts are founded on truth.

I think, then, that the *term* "superior" is bad, as it involves this horrible consequence. Let the word "perfect," then, be offered as a substitute ; to which each who aspires may indulge a hope of arriving ; or rather every one (speaking of *men*)<sup>1</sup> may hope to contribute to woman's arrival, which, in fact, is themselves advancing ; although, like the shadow preceding the figure, or the spiral, it always may advance, and never touch.

My sister does not come to town, nor will she ever, at least I can see no chance of it. I will not deceive myself ; she is lost, lost to everything ; Intolerance has tainted her—she talks cant and twaddle. I would not venture thus to prophesy without being most perfectly convinced in my own mind of the truth of what I say. It *may* not be irretrievable ; but, yes, it is ! A young female, who only once, only for a short time, asserted her claim to an unfettered use of reason, bred up with bigots, having before her eyes examples of the consequences of scepticism, or even of philosophy, which she must now see to lead directly to the former. A mother, who is mild and tolerant, yet

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<sup>1</sup> Hogg may have claimed that men were "superior" to women.

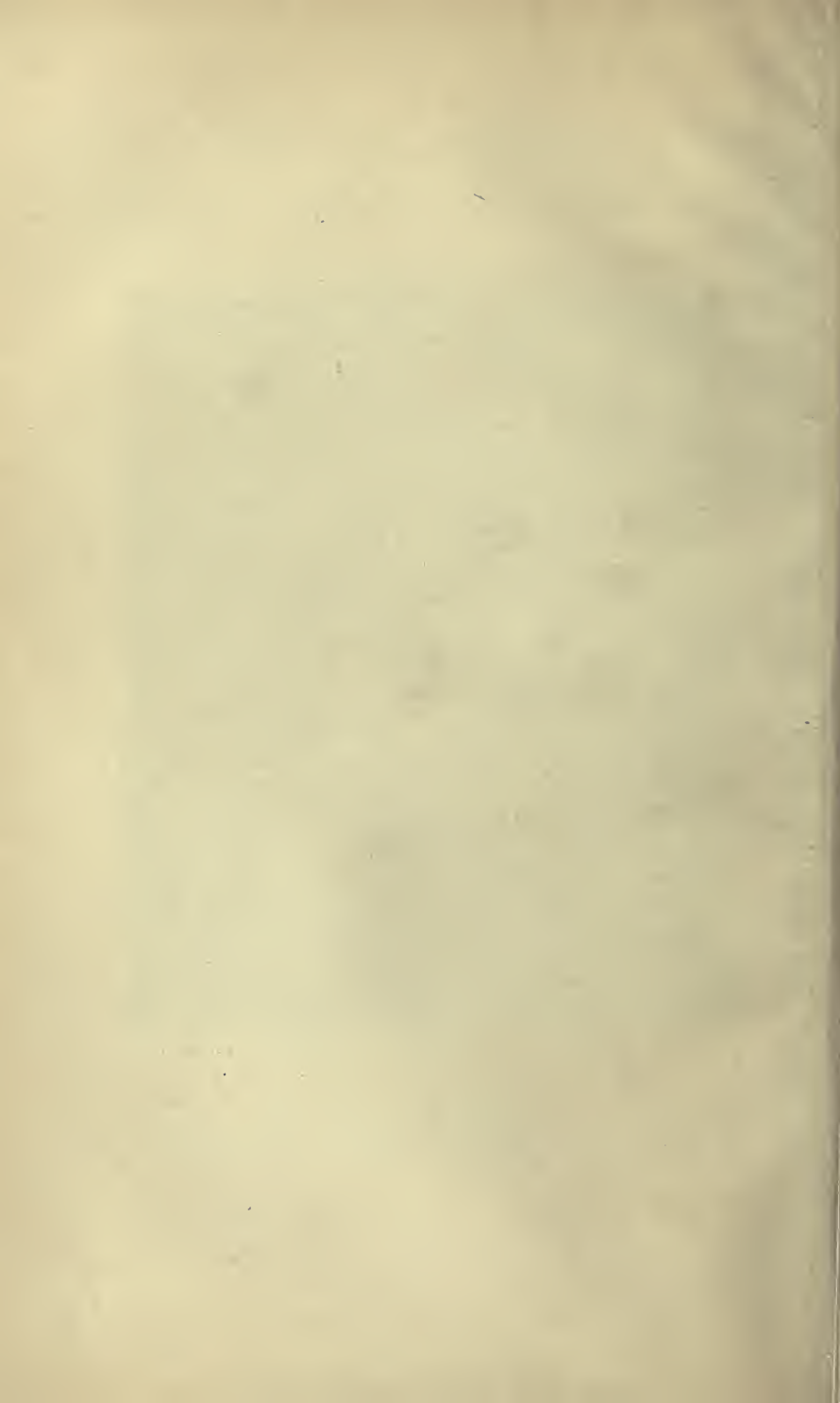




*From a painting by George Romney in the possession of Sir John Shelley, Bart., by permission of the Editor of "The Connoisseur"*

ELIZABETH, LADY SHELLEY

daughter of Charles Pilfold, Esq., and mother of Percy  
Bysshe Shelley



narrow-minded ; how, I ask, *is she* to be rescued from its influence ?

I tell you, my dear friend, openly, the feelings of my mind, the state of its convictions on every subject ; this, then, is one, and I do not expect that you will say, " It must be so painful to your feelings, that I hope you will never again mention it." I do not expect you to say, " I had rather you were under a pleasing error ; it is not a friendly act to dissipate the mists, which hide a frightful prospect." On other subjects you have soared above prejudices, you have investigated them, terrible as they may have appeared, and resolved to abide by the result of that investigation. And you *have* abided by it. Why then should there yet remain a subject on which you profess yourself fearful to inquire ? I will not allow you to say incompetent. Error cannot in any of its shapes be good, I cannot conceive the possibility.

You talk of the credulity of mankind, its proneness to superstition, that it ever has been a slave to the vilest of errors. Is your inference necessary, or direct, that it ever will continue so ? You say that " I have no idea how society could be freed from false notions on almost every subject." No ; nor would the first man in the world, supposing that there ever was one, at the moment of his arriving to his estate, have any conception how a fertile piece of land would look without weeds ; he stares at it, and thinks it is least of all fitted for his conveniences, when a stricter searching into its nature would convince him that it was calculated to contribute to them with a sufficient proportion of labour, more than the barer land, which appeared clear.

Dares the lama, most fleet of the sons of the wind,  
The lion to rouse from his skull-covered lair ?  
When the tiger approaches can the fast-fleeting hind  
Repose trust in his footsteps of air ?  
No ! Abandon'd he sinks in a trance of despair,  
The monster transfixes his prey,  
On the sand flows his life-blood away ;  
Whilst India's rocks to his death-yells reply.  
Protracting the horrible harmony.

Yet the fowl of the desert, when danger encroaches,  
 Dares fearless to perish defending her brood,  
 Though the fiercest of cloud-piercing tyrants approaches,  
 Thirsting—aye, thirsting for blood;  
 And demands, like mankind, his brother for food;  
 Yet more lenient, more gentle than they;  
 For hunger, not glory, the prey  
 Must perish. Revenge does not howl in the dead,  
 Nor ambition with fame crown the murderer's head.

Though weak, as the lama, that bounds on the mountains,  
 And endued not with fast-fleeting footsteps of air,  
 Yet, yet will I draw from the purest of fountains,  
 Though a fiercer than tiger is there.  
 Though more dreadful than death, it scatters despair,  
 Though its shadow eclipses the day,  
 And the darkness of deepest dismay  
 Spreads the influence of soul-chilling terror around,  
 And lowers on the corpses, that rot on the ground.

They came to the fountain to draw from its stream,  
 Waves too pure, too celestial, for mortals to see;  
 They bathed for a while in its silvery beam,  
 Then perish'd, and perish'd like me.  
 For in vain from the grasp of the Bigot I flee;  
 The most tenderly loved of my soul  
 Are slaves to his hated control.  
 He pursues me, he blasts me! 'Tis in vain that I fly:  
 What remains, but to curse him,—to curse him and die?

There it is—a mad effusion of this morning! I had resolved not to mortgage before you left London; I told you that I should divide it with my sisters, and leave everything else to fate.

Your affectionate friend,  
 P. B. S.

41. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG  
 (York)

15 POLAND STREET [LONDON],

April 29, 1811.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Father is as fierce as a lion again. The other day he



was in town. John Grove saw him and succeeded in flattering him into a promise, that he would allow me £200 per annum, and leave me alone.

The *Misery*; for now he has left town, and written to disannul all that he before promised. *Gelidum Nemus*<sup>1</sup> is flattering like a courtier, and will, I conjecture, bring him about again. He wants me to go to Oxford to apologize to the Master, etc. No, of course!

I suppose you are now at York. I wish I could come and join you, particularly as I fear you think too much on subjects which are better for oblivion than memory.

Write something—will you make a novel?—engage in some pursuit which can interest you. I wish you would allow me to be your Dr. Willis. I would not, as I threatened in the Piazza, confine you in a dark room—no, I would advise a regimen the very opposite to that which I then recommended. You say the scenery of Wales is *too* beautiful. Yet, why not allow that to interest you? why not cultivate the taste for poetry, which it is useless to deny that you possess?

Indeed, I wish to come to York. I shall as soon as I can, not that I mean the strain detains me, as I am nearly well, but I want to settle pecuniary matters. I am quite well off in that now. Remember it is idle to talk of money between us, and little as it may do for politics, with us, you must allow the possession of bullion, chattels, etc., is common. Tell me, then, if you want cash, as I have nearly drained you, and all delicacy, like sisters stripping before each other, is out of the question.

Our beautiful lady tells me that "the post is ready." So adieu!

Your affectionate.

I will write when I hear from you. This goes to York.

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<sup>1</sup> John Grove.

42. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG  
(York)

LONDON,

[No date : about May 1, 1811.]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Your two letters were delivered to me. Believe me that I will not so soon give up a being whom I considered so amiable. I will not yet decide ; but your conclusion is to the point, and terribly just. Unequivocal traces of her having yielded to the guidance of the *first* motives can be found. Are we then to despair ?

But I quit the subject ; the experiment shall be made, and I will abide by the result. I anxiously, eagerly anticipate the moment of trial. Moment ! Ought it not rather to be years ; or rather ought *years* even to decide a question so important ?

You sent me some beautiful verses ; but I am not accustomed to be flattered, and you will make me either vain past bearing, or confused past recovery, if you talk so of my weak essays of procedure on "the steep ascent" of perfectibility. Why, how dare I attempt to climb a mountain, when I have no guide to point out the path, but a few faint sparks, which at intervals illumine the gloom ? For these even am I not more indebted to *you* than to myself ?

Certainly a saint *may* be amiable ; she *may* be so, but then she does not understand—has neglected to investigate—the religion which retiring, modest prejudice leads her to profess. But one who certainly never has investigated the matter—seen the slight grounds upon which these dogmas rest,—surely the glaring inconsistencies of every system of mythology must strike her ? Surely she can find benefits enough to return thanks to her Creator for, without having recourse to the mythological personages of superstition ? Otherwise, by your criterion of amiability, that woman would deserve our most fervent attachment who worshipped all the Roman Pantheon, old or new.

I will write to-morrow. I am now called to Miss Westbrook ; I was too hasty in telling my first unfavourable impression : she is a very clever girl, though rather affected. No ! I do not know that she is. I have been with her to Clapham. I will tell you an anecdote. Harriet Westbrook has returned thither, as I mentioned. They will not speak to her ; her schoolfellows will not even reply to her questions ; she is called an *abandoned* wretch, and universally hated, which she remunerates with the calmest contempt. My third sister, Hellen, is the only exception. She, in spite of the *infamy*, will speak to Miss Westbrook, because she cannot see how she has done wrong.<sup>1</sup> There are some hopes of this dear little girl ; she would be a divine little scion of infidelity, if I could get hold of her. I think my lessons here must have taken effect. I write to-morrow.

43. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG  
(York)

6 S[OUTH] BUILD[INGS], LONDON,  
May 8, 1811.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Again I write to you from S[outh] B[uildings]. I have received very few of your letters ; they have been sent to Portland Street, and I cannot recover them. There is one to-day from Yoxford ; are you there ? You have reason—you have a right to be surprised that I am not at Field Place, that I did not instantly fly thither in spite of everything. I will explain as soon as possible. You will hear that I am there in the course of a few days.

The estate is *entirely* entailed to me, totally out of the power of the enemy. He is yet angry beyond measure—pacification is remote ; but I will be at peace, vi et armis.

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<sup>1</sup> See Harriet Shelley's letter to Miss Hitchener from Dublin, March 14, 1812, p. 279.

I will enter his dominions, preserving a Quaker-like carelessness of opposition. I shall manage à l'Amérique, and seat myself quietly in his mansion, turning a deaf ear to any declamatory objections.

A few days ago I had a polite note from a man of letters, to whom I had been named, to invite me to breakfast. I complied, and dined with him on Sunday. He is a Deist, despising superstition, etc., etc., yet having a high veneration for the Deity, as he affirmed. And, in consequence, a long argument arose between him and some of his acquaintance ; that a Deist certainly means the same as an Atheist ; they differ but in name. He would not allow this, with him the Deity is neither omnipotent, omnipresent, nor identical. He destroys, too, all those predicates in *non*, against which they entered their protest. He says, that God is comprehensible, not doubting but an adequate exertion of reason (which, he says, is by no means to be despaired of) would lead us from a contemplation of his works to a definite knowledge of his attributes, which are not unlimited. Now, here is a new kind of God for you !

In practice, such a Deist as this is, as they told him, an Atheist ; for he believes that the Creator is by no means perfect, but composed of good and evil, like man, and producing that mixture of these principles which is evident everywhere. He is a man of cultivated mind, and certainly exalted notions, and his friends do not entirely despair of rescuing him out of this damnable heresy from reason. His wife is a most sensible woman ; she is by no means a bigot, but rather Deistically given. It is a curious fact that they were married when they were both Wesleyan Methodists, and subsequently converted each other.

Solitude is most horrible, in despite of the ἀφιλαντία which, perhaps, vanity has a great share in ; but certainly not with my own good will. I cannot endure the horror, the evil, which comes to *self* in solitude.

I spend most of my time at Miss Westbrook's. I was a great deal too hasty in criticizing her character. How



often have we to alter the impressions which first sight, or first anything, produces. I really now consider her as amiable, not perhaps in a high degree, but perhaps she is. I most probably now am prejudiced, for you cannot breathe, you cannot exist if *no* traits of loveliness appear in co-existent beings. I think, were I compelled to associate with Shakespeare's Caliban, with any wretch—with the exception of Lord Courtney, my father, Bishop Warburton, or the vile female who destroyed Mary —<sup>1</sup> that I should find something to admire.

What a strange being I am ; how inconsistent, in spite of all my boasted hatred of self : this moment thinking I could so far overcome Nature's law, as to exist in complete seclusion, the next starting from a moment of solitude—starting from my own company, as if it were that of a fiend—seeking anything rather than a continued communion with *self*. Unravel this mystery, but—no, I tell you to find the clue which even the bewildered explorer of the cavern cannot reach.

I long for the moment to see my sisters ; you shall then hear from me even oftener.

I lost three letters, which I had written to you, in my carelessness. Adieu ! My dear friend, believe me ever attentive to your happiness.

I wish that vile family despotism, and the viler despotism of society, could never stand between the happiness of two beings. Excuse the *φιλαυτία*, it would constitute mine. Adieu !

Your eternal friend.

<sup>1</sup> Prof. Dowden says ("Life of Shelley," Vol. I, p. 156), "Mary was an unhappy girl known to Hogg, who had embodied part of her story in his unpublished novel 'Leonora.' Shelley hated Warburton because he 'dogmatically asserts' that one who 'has neglected to cultivate faith, has not performed one-third of the moral duties.'" See Shelley to Hogg, April 26, 1811 p. 60.

## 44. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG

(York)

[23 CHAPEL STREET, LONDON,  
Post-mark, May ? 12, 1811.]

I found this moment all your letters.<sup>1</sup> They were in Great Portland Street. I blush when I write the direction to you. How salacious a street !

So *you* are in solitude. I wish I could be with you. I wish you could manage to come to town.

£200 per annum is really enough—more than I can want—besides, what is money to me ? What does it matter if I cannot even purchase sufficient *genteel clothes* ? I still have a shabby great coat, and those whose good opinion constitutes my happiness, would not regard me the better, or the worse, for this, or any other consequence of poverty. £50 per annum would be quite enough.

Why, you wish to be a Grandee ! When heaven takes your father you will probably be in possession—as his eldest son—of some £3,000 per annum, that perhaps convertible from 3 into 5 per cent. property. I should not know how to act with such a store ; but—no, I would not possess about half of it ! Yet well do I see why you would not reject it ; you think it would possibly add to the happiness of some being, to whom you cherish a remote hope of approximative union—the indissoluble, sacred union of Love :

Why is it said thou canst not live  
In a youthful breast and fair,  
Since thou eternal life canst give,  
Canst bloom for ever there ?  
Since withering pain no power possest,  
Nor age, to blanch thy vermeil hue,

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<sup>1</sup> The date of this letter is given by Hogg as May 2, but from Shelley's reference in No. 43 to the missing letters (which he had now recovered) it would seem to have followed that letter. Possibly the post-mark is May 12. The letters appear to have been sent to Great Portland Street in mistake for Poland Street.

Nor time's dread victor, death, confess'd,  
 Though bathed with his poison dew,  
 Still thou retain'st unchanging bloom,  
 Fix'd tranquil, even in the tomb.  
 And oh! when on the blest reviving  
 The day-star dawns of love,  
 Each energy of soul surviving  
 More vivid, soars above,  
 Hast thou ne'er felt a rapturous thrill,  
 Like June's warm breath, athwart thee fly,  
 O'er each idea then to steal,  
 When other passions die?  
 Felt it in some wild noonday dream,  
 When sitting by the lonely stream,  
 Where Silence says, Mine is the dell;  
 And not a murmur from the plain,  
 And not an echo from the fell,  
 Disputes her silent reign.

Excuse this strange momentary mania! I am now at Miss Westbrook's. She is reading Voltaire's "Dictionnaire Philosophique." I am writing to you, but I broke off a page ago. Have you hope? Can you have hope? Then, indeed, are you fitted for an Orlando Speroso—if there is such an Italian word. I have *faint* hopes: I have some it is true—just enough to keep body and soul together; but you——. I almost despair. I have not only to conquer all the hateful prejudices of superstition, not only to conquer duty to a father—*duty*, indeed, of all kinds—but I see in the background a monster more terrific. Have you forgotten the tremendous Gregory—the opinion of the world, its myriads of hateful champions, its ten thousands of votaries who deserved a better fate, yet compulsatorily were plunged into this——. I tremble when I think of it.

Yet marriage, Godwin says, is hateful, detestable.<sup>1</sup> A kind of ineffable, sickening disgust seizes my mind when I think of this most despotic, most unrequired fetter which prejudice has forged to confine its energies. Yes! This is the fruit of superstition, and superstition must perish before this can fall! For men never speak of the author of religion as of what he really was, but as being what the

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<sup>1</sup> See Godwin's "Political Justice."

world have made him. Antimatrimonialism is as necessarily connected with scepticism as if religion and marriage began their course together. How can we think well of the world? Surely these moralists suppose young men are like young puppies (as, perhaps, *generaliter* they are), not endowed with vision until a certain age. Adieu!

#### 45. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG

(York)

CUCKFIELD,

[? May 13, 1811.]<sup>1</sup>

Have you forgotten it? Have you forgotten that "laws were not made for men of honour?" Your memory may fail; it is human; but the infernal conclusions you have drawn, which I see you cannot, will not admit is too much. There are some points on which reasoning is inefficient to convince the mind. No one could persuade me of the tortoise and Achilles business, even although they might say that I must believe it, because they had proved it, and I could find no flaw in their reasoning. I could not endure the bare idea of marriage, even if I had no arguments in favour of my dislike; but I think that I have. I shall begin *à la Faber*; how far I proceed thus, you have to judge.

Your first assertion, on which stands all the rest, does not profess to be founded on *proof*; but the long-established opinion—uncontroverted, undisputed, except by occasional characters of brilliancy, or darkness—that it is a duty to comply with the established laws of your country—this I deny. Then virtue does not exist; or if it does, exists in so indefinite a manner—Proteus-like so

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<sup>1</sup> Mr. Rossetti suggests the above date, which is given as August 9, 1811, by Hogg in his "Life of Shelley."



changes its appearances with every varying climate, that what is a crime in England becomes not merely venial, perhaps praiseworthy at Algiers; that each petty river, each chain of mountains, an arm of the sea constitutes a line of distinction between two different kinds of duties, to both of which it is requisite that virtue should adapt itself. What constitutes real virtue?—motive, or consequence? Surely the former. In proportion as a man is selfish, so far has he receded from the motive which constitutes virtue. I have left the proof to Aristotle. Shall we take Godwin's criterion: Expediency? Oh! surely not. Any very satisfactory general reform is, I fear, impracticable: human nature, taken in the mass, if we compare it with instances of individual virtue, is corrupt beyond all hope;—for *these* laws are necessary: these are *not men of honour*; they are not beings capable of exalted notions of virtue; they cannot feel the passions of soft tenderness, the *object of whose regard is distinct* from selfish desire. Is it right that of these the world should be composed? Certainly not, were the evil to be obviated; but it is not to be obviated: all essays of benevolent reformers have failed. Any step, however small, towards such obviation, is, however, good, as it tends to produce that which, though impossible, yet were it possible, would be desirable. On this plan, then, do I recommend antimatrimonialism. It is a feeling which (as we take it, and as it is now the subject of discussion) can at once be experienced by minds which at least adore virtue. It is, then, of general application; and if every one loved, then every one would be happy. This is impossible; but certain it is that the more that love the more are blest. Shall, then, the world step forward—that world which wallows in selfishness and every hateful passion, the consequence of an absence of reason; shall that world give laws to souls, who smile superior to its palsying influence, who let the tempest of prejudice rave unheeded, happy in the consciousness of the ἀφιλαυτία of motive. Oh! no. Can

you compare Eloisa and a ruffian? Eloisa, who sacrificed all *self* for another! Macheath,<sup>1</sup> who sacrificed every other for himself! These motives are wide apart as the antipodes—wide as the characters themselves—wide as virtue and vice. Take, then, your criterion, and measure by that. For God's sake, if you want more argument, read the Marriage Service before you *think* of allowing an amiable, beloved female to submit to such degradation. But you are convinced by force; but I do not admire the source of conviction; it is knightlike. I am no admirer of knights; their obedience was not founded on reason: and if we were errants, you should have the tilting all to yourself. Now, my friend, what can you want with six hundred pounds per annum? Surely you, with an amiable being, could easily live on half. Believe me, these are very secondary considerations. There! stay! I am wandering. But is the Antigone immoral? Did she wrong, when she acted in direct, in noble violation of the laws of a prejudiced society? You will, I know, have candour to acknowledge that your premises will not stand; and I now *most perfectly* agree with you that political affairs are quite distinct from morality—that they cannot be united.

To-morrow I go to Field-place. Direct henceforward there, till you hear again; as, if they have removed Elizabeth, I shall follow her. My letters will then be more interesting, as they will be filled with what is equally so to both. Heaven defend me from a disappointment!

Misses Westbrook are now very well. I have arranged a correspondence with them, when I will impart more of the character of the eldest.

Believe me, your most affectionate, P. B. S.

Direct, until farther orders, to Captain Pilfold, Cuckfield, Sussex.

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<sup>1</sup> Captain of the highwaymen in Gay's "Beggars' Opera."

46. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG  
(York)

[FIELD PLACE, HORSHAM],  
May 15, 1811.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I now write to you from hence. I have at last reached the place of my destination. I know you will anxiously await this. On my arrival I found my sister ill. She has been confined with a scarlet fever. The ignorance of these country physicians has, I think, prolonged her confinement. She is now much better, but scarcely able to articulate from a sore throat. You shall hear more when I write again. I must acknowledge that some emotions of pleasure were mingled with those of pain, when I found that illness had prevented her writing to me.

I have come to terms with my father. I call them very good ones. I am to possess £200 per annum. I shall live very well upon it, even after the legal opinion which you inclosed. I am also to do as I please with respect to the choice of abode. I need not mention what it will be. *When* do you come to London? at what time?—a year; six months; four months?

F[aber]<sup>1</sup> will be written to to-day; you may depend upon the execution of my palavering energies. It would be a strange—I do not know a stranger composition than would be the *mélange*, which you spoke of. Try—compose it. I am sure I could not. The “Confessions of Rousseau” are the only things of the kind that have appeared, and they are either a disgrace to the confessor, or a string of falsehoods, probably the latter. But the world would say that ours were the latter. Nor could I blame them for such an opinion, as probable truth is to be the judge of testimony, and singularity must be improbable, or it would not be singularity; nor do I think that it has often come under the observation of the world that two young men

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<sup>1</sup> Rev. George Stanley Faber.

should hold such arguments, come to such conclusions, and take such singular criterions for reasoning. Is not the last strangest? How goes on your tale?<sup>1</sup> I have heard nothing of it. As for mine<sup>2</sup> I cannot get an answer from L[ongman?]. Do they tremble? I thought the A[bingdon?] printer was too stupid; and I defy a zealot to say it does not support orthodoxy. If an author's own assertion in his own book may be taken as an avowal of his intentions, it does support orthodoxy. I could not do more, and yet they say *Mine* is not printable; it is as bad as Rousseau, and would certainly be prosecuted. All danger about prosecution is over; it was *never* more than a hum.

I will tell you a piece of the most consummate hypocrisy I ever heard of. A relation<sup>3</sup> of mine was walking with my uncle<sup>4</sup> (who, by the bye, has settled matters admirably for me), says this Wiseacre, "to tell you the truth, *I* am a Sceptic."

"Ah! eh!" thought the Captain, "old birds are not to be caught with chaff."

"Are you, indeed?" was the cold reply, and no more was got out of him.

I tell you this as the Captain told it me. Is this irrational being really convinced of what men have attained by the use of reason? If he is, he is a disgrace to reason, and I am sorry that the cause has gained weakness by the

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<sup>1</sup> Hogg's novel was apparently distinct from the book mentioned in the following note. The MS. of this novel seems to have been sent to Shelley subsequently. It can hardly have been Hogg's "Memoirs of Prince Alexy Haimatoff," published pseudonymously in 1813, as Shelley does not appear to have seen that story before publication. See p. 414.

<sup>2</sup> Probably "Leonora," Shelley's novel, which he appears to have offered to Messrs. Longman, but fears that the Abingdon printer may have alarmed them by describing the unorthodox nature of the book. See p. 18.

<sup>3</sup> The "relation" was Shelley's father, from the context below.

<sup>4</sup> Captain Pilfold.



accession of weakness. But he is nothing—no-*ist*, professes no-*ism*, but superbism and irrationalism. He has forbidden my intercourse with my sister, but the Captain brought him to reason; he prevents it, however, as much as possible, which is very little.

My mother is quite rational; she says, "I think *prayer* and thanksgiving are of no use. If a man is a good man, philosopher, or Christian, he will do very well in whatever future state awaits us." This I call liberality!

You shall hear from me soon again. I write to F[aber]. I know you will excuse a long letter, as I am going to read to Elizabeth.

Your ever affectionate friend.

*Inclose* to T. SHELLEY, Esq., M.P.

#### 47. TO JANETTA PHILIPPS

FIELD PLACE,

May 16, 1811.

I address you wholly unacquainted, un-introduced, except through the medium of your exquisite poetry,<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Whether Shelley defrayed the printing expenses of this volume or not does not seem quite clear. The volume with the title "Poems, by Janetta Philipps, Oxford, printed by Collingwood and Co., 1811," was issued to subscribers, of which there is a list occupying ten pages, containing the names of Mr. P. B. Shelley (six copies); Miss Shelley, Field Place; Miss Hellen Shelley; Mrs. Grove, Lincoln's Inn Fields (three copies); Miss H. Westbrook; Thomas Medwin, Esq., Horsham; Mr. Munday, Bookseller, Oxford; Mr. Graham, 29 Vine Street, Piccadilly; and Mr. Philipps (six copies); the last named was probably a relative of the author, who subscribed for the same number as Shelley, no one else taking as many copies. From the following letter it would appear that Miss Philipps declined Shelley's offer to print her poems, and that they were issued by subscription. The sale of the 525 copies of the book accounted for in the list contained in the volume would be sufficient to defray the printer's bill. Dr. W. C. Coupland, who first printed these interesting letters in his "Gain of Life," and who has generously given me leave to reprint them, states that Miss Philipps' "relatives and acquaintances were mostly resident in Bridgwater and its neighbourhood." She does not seem to have been related to Phillips, the Worthing printer, whose name was spelt differently.

nor know I any circumstances which can apologize for this breach of etiquette, but Mr. Strong having in consequence of the very different views which we have taken of *religion*, declined the slightest communication with me on the subject of your poems. An enthusiastic adorer of genius, I expressed my admiration of the *genius* which I found in the MSS. in question, and I confess should have selected some of those which Mr. S. rejected for publication. I offered to print the MS. at my own expense, as it would make even some balances with my printer. I still solicit that honour. Mr. S. promised that he would deliver the MS. to me for that purpose, as fearing my intention might shock the delicacy of a noble female mind, I intended to conceal it entirely; that, however, will now be pardoned, as you see the necessity of the avowal.

On my expulsion from Oxford, as author of a metaphysical pamphlet, Mr. S., very much shocked at my principles, refused further correspondence. I am, therefore, obliged to address you, as I am still anxious that every power that I have should be devoted to the development of genius, and am conscious that no unprejudiced mind would esteem me more or less for my differing with it on the speculative points of religion. It is, perhaps, necessary to state in obviation of any misconception on the subject of my sentiments that the pamphlet which I distributed among the learned questioned the existence of a Deity. In justice to myself I must also declare that a proof of *his* existence, or even the divine mission of Christ, would in no manner alter one idea on the subject of morality.

Your most sincere friend,

PERCY B. SHELLEY.

Under cover to

T. SHELLEY, Esq., M.P.,

Field Place, Horsham, Sussex.

Miss JANETTA PHILIPPS.

## 48. TO JANETTA PHILIPPS

MADAM,

I confess I was surprised, extremely surprised, at the receipt of your letter. Why are we here? What does man exist for? Surely not for his own happiness, but as a more perfect instrument of that of others. This even common morality will tell, for *this* we do not want any theological system, not even the belief of a God, the anticipation of his kingdom. How, then, obligations! Surely one being is not *obliged* to another for a performance of his duty never the most rigid. If obligation exists it must arise from doing to another an unrequited, unrequitable kindness. But I *should* have a reward, I should feel pleasure in adding to the comforts of genius. What! two rewards for one simple performance of evident duty—my own feelings and obligations from *you*. This is far too much.—I thought there were some souls which soared above the mean prejudice of the world. I am but a novice in it. I stare about me wondering at the fatuity of its slaves who wilfully destroy their own happiness.—And *pecuniary* obligation! What is there in an acceptance of this political substitute for other things *peculiarly* ignoble? It is the world's opinion. Do you still, then, persist in your resolve, and why? I shall perhaps hear from you again; your letter possibly may contain more briefly the determination of that of to-day. If it *does*, I shall be surprised, but shall feel that I have no longer a right to trespass on the time of a being not *one* of whose opinions coincide with mine.—As you mention Religion, I will say, that my rejection of *revealed* proceeds from my perfect conviction of its insufficiency to the happiness of man—to this source I can trace murder, war, intolerance—my rejection of *natural* arises wholly from *reason*. I *once* was an enthusiastic Deist, but never a Christian.

Your sincere,

P. B. SHELLEY.

Miss JANETTA PHILIPPS.

6—(2285)

49. To THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG  
(York)

FIELD PLACE,

May 17, 1811.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

Your letters have never reached me. These sallies of imagination are not noticed by vulgar postmen ! but you know my direction now. Elizabeth<sup>1</sup> is quite recovered in health.

It is most true that the mass of mankind are Christians only in name ; their religion has no reality. So little, indeed, that they almost confess the *world* to be the only reason for their yet retaining their mummeries. Christ is not the Son of God : the world is eternal, their practice would seem to declare. There almost all are agreed, and in the speculative points of religion they seem to be as Atheistical as the most determined Materialist could desire. But what is this speculation—a dry inactive knowledge of what really is, not influencing the conduct ? One would suppose that the annihilation of superstition would involve the fall of the world's opinion ; but if the world's opinion were destroyed, superstition would be of little consequence, even if it did exist, which is indeed not very probable, as there would then be no temptations to self-deception. The opinion of the world, the loss of which is attended with much inconvenience, with the loss of reputation, which is by some considered as synonymous with virtue ;—this is the support of many prejudices. Certain members of my family are no more Christians than Epicurus himself was ; but they regard as a sacred criterion the opinion of the world : the disanonization of this saint of theirs is impossible until something more worthy of devotion is pointed out ; but where eyes are shut, nothing can be seen ! They would ask, are we wrong to regard the opinion of the

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<sup>1</sup> Shelley's Sister.



world; what would compensate us for the loss of it? Good heavens! What a question? It is not to be answered by a word! So I have but little of their confidence: the confidence of my sister even is diminished, that confidence once so unbounded: but it is to be regained. But enough of this! In letters, behold me enthusiastic, Quixotic, resolved, convinced, that things shall be as I order them,—that all my plans shall succeed. But I shall anticipate all your castle-buildings, so adieu to this subject also!

Why will you not send me some poetry? I wish to see it directly.

#### TO THE MOONBEAM

Moonbeam, leave the shadowy vale,  
 To bathe this burning brow.  
 Moonbeam, why art thou so pale,  
 As thou walkest o'er the dewy dale,  
 Where humble wild flowers grow?  
 Is it to mimic me?  
 But that can never be;  
 For thine orb is bright,  
 And the clouds are light,  
 That at intervals shadow the star-studded night.

Now all is deathly still on earth,  
 Nature's tired frame reposes,  
 And ere the golden morning's birth  
 Its radiant hues discloses,  
 Flies forth its balmy breath.  
 But mine is the midnight of Death,  
 And nature's morn,  
 To my bosom forlorn,  
 Brings but a gloomier night, implants a deadlier thorn.

Wretch! Suppress the glare of madness  
 Struggling in thine haggard eye,  
 For the keenest throb of sadness,  
 Pale Despair's most sickening sigh,  
 Is but to mimic me;  
 And this must ever be,  
 When the twilight of care,  
 And the night of despair,  
 Seem in my breast but joys to the pangs that wake there.

There is rhapsody! Now, I think, after this, you ought to send me some poetry. Pray which of the Miss

Westbrooks do *you* like ? They are both very amiable, I do not know which is favoured with your preference. As to your manner, call it *manner*, if you will ; perhaps it is proper thus to express a thing, which I thought was inexpressible. Call it so, then, for I know no other name.

How gets on your onion-loving Deist ? Pray, what is there in onions and red herrings which can make her less amiable ? She is not very handsome either : Oh ! that is all imagination.

I have written to F[aber] ; I wrote the moment your letter came, and make no doubt but he will think me a very good young man. I cannot so deeply see into the inferences of actions, as to come to the odd conclusion, which you observed in the matter of Miss Westbrook. Where we have *facts*, they are superior to all the reasoning in the world. I should like to see your letter to F[aber].

Your ever affectionate.

#### 50. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG

(York)

SUNDAY, 19th May, 1811.

Captain Pilfold's, Cuckfield.

Your letter found me here this morning. Strange ! you have not received one of mine, and I have written almost every day during my stay in London.

I go to Field-place to-morrow, whence you will hear from me again. I will write to F[aber]. Poor fool ! His Christian mildness, his consistent forgiveness of injuries amuses me ; he is "*le vrai esprit de Christianisme*," which Helvetius talks of ; he would call this a Christian.

I am now with my uncle ; he is a very hearty fellow, and has behaved very nobly to me, in return for which I have illuminated him. A physician named Dr. J—— dined with us last night, who is a red-hot saint ; the Captain attacked

him, warm from "The Necessity,"<sup>1</sup> and the Doctor went away very much shocked.

You have before this certes received *some* of my letters. I expect to hear from you often; you will constantly receive accounts from Field-place, whither direct in future. I received a beautiful little poem of yours; I did not acknowledge it, I believe, but I was not the less pleased. It is a melancholy subject, why will you continue to think on it? But you say "Melancholy is as necessary in poetry as breath to life, the Muses being the daughters of Memory, and consequently of Sadness." Miss Westbrook, the elder, I have heard from to-day; she improves upon acquaintance; or is it only when contrasted with surrounding indifference and degradation? But all excellence is comparative—exists by comparison; I have therefore a right. The younger is in prison; there is something in *her* more noble, yet not so cultivated as the elder—a larger diamond, yet not so highly polished. Her indifference to, her contempt of surrounding prejudice, are certainly fine. But perhaps the other wants opportunity. I confess that I cannot mark female excellence, or its degrees, by a print of the foot, a waving of vesture, etc., as you can; but perhaps this criterion only holds good where an *angel*, not a mortal, is in the case.

Why will you compliment "St. Irvyn[e]"? I never saw Delisle's, but mine must have been pla——<sup>2</sup>.

Adieu! My dear friend, believe me eternally yours. You shall hear to-morrow.

In haste.

Yours affectionately,

P. B. SHELLEY.

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<sup>1</sup> "The Necessity of Atheism." See p. 48.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. H. Buxton Forman suggests in his edition of Shelley's Prose Works (Vol. I, p. xii), that both "Zastrozzi" and "St. Irvyne" may have been adapted by Shelley from the German, although his acquaintance with that language, if any, must have been very slight. Perhaps Shelley meant to write that his German original must have been "plagiarized" from some romance or drama by Delisle.—Prof. Dowden's "Life of Shelley" (Vol. I, p. 94).

## 51. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG

(York)

FIELD PLACE [HORSHAM],

May 21, 1811.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

She<sup>1</sup> is quite *well*; she is perfect in health! Now, that is enough; we have no fever to sympathize in: but who can minister to a *mind* diseased? She is very gay, very lively. I did not show her your last letter; it was too grave; and I think it is barbarous to diminish what the possessor considers a pleasure, although I have always considered that volatility of character evinces no capabilities for great affections. It is a kind of self-satisfaction in trivial things that is constantly exerting itself; it is a species of continually awakened pride; but it is not constitutional; it used not, however, to be the character of my sister—serious, contemplative, affectionate; enthusiastically alive to the wildest schemes; despising the world.

Now, apathetic to all things, except the trivial amusements and despicable intercourse of restrained conversation; bowing before that hellish idol, the *world*; appealing to its unjust decisions, in cases which demand a trial at the higher tribunal of conscience. Yet I do not despair; what she *once was* she has a power to be again; but will that power ever be exerted? I do not hesitate to say, that I think she is not worthy of us; *once* she was: once the fondest, warmest wish which ever I cherished was to witness the *eternal* perfectibility of a being, who appeared to me made for perfection. But she is now *not* what she was; she is not the singular, angelic being, whom I loved, whom I adored: ? mourn her as no more. I consider the sister, whose happiness is mine, as dead.

Yet have I not hopes of a resuscitation? Certainly, or I would not tear my heart with the narration. But it is necessary that you should be informed of the real state of the case.

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<sup>1</sup> Apparently Elizabeth Shelley.



I will think no more of her, for she has murdered thought. Yes ; I will think, and devote myself with ardour ! On me,—yes, on me, descends the whole weight of my affliction ! What right had I, day after day, to expatiate upon to another, to magnify to myself the excellence of a being who might change, who *has* changed ? What right had I to seek to introduce you to the destroyer ?

I leave Field-place to-night ; but return on Friday.

Your eternally affectionate,

P. B. SHELLEY.

## 52. To THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG

(York)

CUCKFIELD,

May 26, 1811.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Inclosed is F[aber]'s letter. Why have I not heard from you for a week, or more ?

I take the opportunity of the Old Boy's absence in London to persuade my mother and Elizabeth, who is now quite well, to come to Cuckfield ; because there they will be three, or more, days absent from this Killjoy, as I name him. I anxiously expect to hear from you to-morrow. Adieu. Keep up your spirits !

Yours most affectionately,

P. B. S.

## 53. To THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG

(York)

CUCKFIELD,

June 2, 1811.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have nothing to tell you which you will like to hear. The affected contempt of narrowed intellects for the exertion of mental powers, which they either will not, or cannot comprehend, is always a tale of disgust. What must it be, when involving a keen disappointment ? I have hesitated

for three days on what I should do, what I should say. I am your friend, you acknowledge it. You have chosen me, and we are inseparable ; not the little tyranny of idiots can affect it ; not the misrepresentations of the interested. You are then my friend. I am sensible, and you must be sensible, that it is in conformity to the most rigid duty that I would advise you how I have combated with myself.

What is *Passion* ? The very word implies an incapacity for action, otherwise than in unison with its dictates. What is reason ? It is a thing independent, inflexible ; it adapts thoughts and actions to the varying circumstances, which for ever change—adapts them so as to produce the greatest overbalance of happiness. And to whom do you *now* give happiness ? Not to others, for you associate with but few : those few regard you with the highest feelings of admiration and friendship ; but perhaps there is but one ;—and here is self again—not to yourself ; for the truth of this I choose *yourself*, as a testimony against you. I think ; reason ; listen ; cast off prejudice ; hear the dictates of plain common sense—surely is it not evident ? I loved a being, an idea in my own mind, which had no real existence. I concreted this abstract of perfection, I annexed this fictitious quality to the idea presented by a *name* ; the being, whom that name signified, was by no means worthy of this. This is the truth : Unless I am determinedly blind—unless I am resolved causelessly and selfishly to seek destruction, I must see it. Plain ! is it not plain ? I loved a being ; the being, whom I loved, is not what she was ; consequently, as love appertains to mind, and not body, she exists no longer. I regret when I find that she never existed, but in my mind ; yet does it not border on wilful deception, deliberate, intentional self-deceit, to continue to love the body, when the soul is no more ? As well might I court the worms which the soulless body of a beloved being generates—be lost to myself, and to those who love me for what is really amiable in me—in the damp, unintelligent vaults of a charnel-house. Surely, when it is carried to the

ding-heap as a mass of putrefaction, the loveliness of the flower ceases to charm. Surely it would be irrational to annex to this inertness the properties which the flower in its state of beauty possessed, which now cease to exist, and then *did* merely exist, because adjoined to it. Yet you will call this *cold reasoning*? No; you will not! this would be the exclamation of the uninformed Werter, not of my noble friend. But, indeed, it is not *cold* reasoning, if you saw me at this moment. I wish I could reason coldly, I should then stand more chance of success. But let me reconsider it myself—exert my own reasoning powers; let me entreat myself to awake. This—I do not know what I say. I go to Field-place; to-morrow you shall hear again. I go to Field-place *now*: this moment, I have rung the bell for the horse.

Your eternal Friend.

I wrote to her to entreat that she would receive my letter kindly; I wrote very long. This is the answer<sup>1</sup>. Are you deaf, are you dead? I am cold and icy, but I cannot refrain. Stay, I will come soon.—Adieu!

54. TO ELIZABETH HITCHENER  
(Hurstpierpoint)

FIELD PLACE [HORSHAM],

June 6, 1811.

DEAR MADAM,

I desired Locke to be sent to you from London, and the Captain has two books which he will give you . . . "The Curse of Kehama," and Ensor's "National Education."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In Shelley's letter to Hogg of May 17, 1811 (p. 83), he says "the confidence of my sister (Elizabeth) even is diminished, that confidence once so unbounded: but it is to be regained." Here Shelley's attempts to induce his sister to "assert her claim to an unfettered use of reason" (p. 64) were evidently not received by her with sympathy.

<sup>2</sup> George Ensor (1769-1841), a writer of political books, whose philosophical essay "The Independent Man," was published in 1806, "National Education" in 1811, and some works attacking the English Government of Ireland, "Anti-union: Ireland as it ought to be," 1831, and a "Defence of the Irish," 1825.

The latter is the production of a very clever man. You may keep the poem as long as you please, but I shall want the latter in the course of a month or two—before which, however, I shall have the pleasure of seeing you. I fear our arguments are too long, and too candidly carried on, to make any figure on paper. *Feelings* do not look so well as reasonings on black and white. If, however, secure of your own orthodoxy, you would attempt my proselytism, believe me I should be most happy to subject myself to the danger. But I know that you, like myself, are a devotee at the shrine of Truth. Truth is *my* God; and say he is Air, Water, Earth, or Electricity, but I think *yours* is reducible to the same simple Divinityship. Seriously, however, if you *very* widely differ, or differ indeed in the least, from me on the subject of our late argument, the only reason which *would* induce me to object to a polemical correspondence, is that it might deprive *your* time of that application which its value deserves: *mine* is totally vacant.

Walter Scott has published a new poem, "The Vision of Don Roderick."<sup>1</sup> I have ordered it. You shall have it when I have finished. I am not very enthusiastic in the cause of Walter Scott. The aristocratical tone which his writings assume does not prepossess me in his favour, since my opinion is that all poetical beauty ought to be subordinate to the inculcated moral . . . that metaphorical language ought to be a pleasing vehicle for useful and momentous instruction. But see Ensor on the subject of poetry.

Adieu. Your sincere

PERCY SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],  
Horsham, June Six, 1811,  
Miss HITCHENER,

Hurstpierpoint,  
[Franked by] Brighton.  
T. SHELLEY.

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<sup>1</sup> In the *Morning Chronicle* for June 14, 1811, "The Vision of Don Roderick" is advertised as "In the press and will be published in a few days."



55. TO ELIZABETH HITCHENER<sup>1</sup>  
(Hurstpierpoint)

FIELD PLACE [HORSHAM],

June 11, 1811.

MY DEAR MADAM,

With pleasure I engage in a correspondence which carries its own recommendation both with my feelings and my reason. . . I am now, however, an undivided votary of the latter. I do not know which were most complimentary : but as you do not admire, as I do not study, this aristocratical science, it is of little consequence. Am I to expect an enemy or an ally in Locke ? Locke *proves* that there are no innate ideas, that in consequence, there can be no innate speculative or practical principles, thus overturning all appeals of *feeling* in favor of Deity, since that feeling must be referable to some origin. There must have been a time when it did not exist ; in consequence, a time when it began to exist. Since all ideas are derived from the senses, this *feeling* must have originated from some sensual excitation, consequently the possessor of it may be aware of the time, of the circumstances, attending its commencement. . . . Locke proves this by induction too clear to admit of rational objection. He affirms, in a chapter of whose reasoning I leave your reason to judge, that there is a God ; he affirms also, and that in a most unsupported way, that the Holy Ghost dictated St. Paul's writings. Which are we to prefer ? The proof or the affirmation ? . . . To a belief in Deity I have no objection on the score of feeling : I would as gladly, perhaps with greater pleasure, admit than doubt his existence. . . . I now do neither, I have not the shadow of a doubt. . . . My wish to convince you of his non-existence is twofold : first on the score of truth, secondly because I conceive it to be the most summary way of eradicating Christianity. . . . I plainly

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<sup>1</sup> In these letters to Miss Hitchener the dots are not to be taken as signs of omission, but as Shelley's mode of punctuation.

tell you my intentions and my views. . . . I see a being whose aim, like mine, is virtue . . . Christianity militates with a high pursuit of it . . . Hers is a high pursuit of it . . . she is therefore not a Christian. Yet wherefore does she deceive herself? Wherefore does she attribute to a spurious, irrational (as proved), disjointed system of desultory ethics, insulting, intolerant theology—that high sense of calm dispassionate virtue which her own meditations have elicited? Wherefore is a man who has profited by this error to say: “You are regarded as a monster in society; eternal punishment awaits your infidelity?” “I do not believe it,” is your reply. “Here is a book,” is the rejoinder. “Pray to the being who is here described, and you shall soon believe.” Surely, if a person obstinately *wills to believe*,—determines spite of himself, spite of the refusal of that part of mind to admit the assent, in which only can assent rationally be centred, *wills thus to put himself* under the influence of passion, all reasoning is superfluous. . . . Yet I do not suppose that you *act* thus (for action it must be called, as belief is a passion); since the religion does not hold out high morality as an apology for an aberration from reason . . . In this latter case, reason might sanction the aberration, and fancy become but an auxiliary to its influence. Dismiss then Christianity, in which no arguments can enter . . . passion and reason are in their natures opposite. Christianity is the former, and Deism (for we are now no further) is the latter. . . . What then is a “God”? It is a name which expresses the unknown cause, the suppositious origin of all existence. When we speak of the soul of man, we mean that unknown cause which produces the observable effect evinced by his intelligence and bodily animation, which are in their nature conjoined, and (as we suppose, as we observe) inseparable. The word God then, in the sense which you take it analogises with the universe, as the soul of man to his body, as the vegetative power to vegetables, the stony power to stones. Yet, were each of these adjuncts taken away, what would

be the remainder ? What is man without his soul ? he is not man . . . What are vegetables without their vegetative power ? stones without their stony ? Each of these as much constitutes the essence of men, stones, etc., as much make it to be what it is, as your " God " does the universe. In this sense I acknowledge a God, but merely as a synonyme [sic] for *the existing power of existence*. . . . I do not in *this* (nor can you do, I think) recognize a being which has created that to which it is confessedly annexed as an essence, as that without which the universe would not be what it is. It is therefore the essence of the universe, the universe is the essence of it. It is another *word* for the essence of the universe. You recognize not in this an identical being to whom are attributable the properties of virtue, mercy, loveliness—imagination delights in personification ; were it not for this embodying quality of eccentric fancy we should be to this day without a God. . . . Mars was personified as the god of war, Juno of policy, etc. But you have formed in your mind the Deity of virtue ; this personification beautiful in Poetry, inadmissible in reasoning, in the true style of Hindoostanish devotion, you have adopted. . . . I war against it for the sake of truth. . . . There is such a thing as virtue, but *what, who*, is this Deity of virtue ? . . . Not the Father of Christ, not the source of the Holy Ghost ; not the God who beheld with favor the coward wretch Abraham, who built the grandeur of his favourite Jews on the bleeding bodies of myriads, on the subjugated necks of the dispossessed inhabitants of Canaan. But here my instances were as long as the memoir of his furious King-like exploits, did not contempt succeed to hatred. Did I now see him seated in gorgeous and tyrannic majesty, as described, upon the throne of infinitude. . . . if I bowed before him, what would virtue say ? virtue's voice is almost inaudible, yet it strikes upon the brain, upon the heart. . . . The howl of self-interest is loud . . . but the heart is black which throbs solely to its note. . . . You say our theory is the same : I believe it.

Then why all this? The power which ma[kes]<sup>1</sup> me a scribbler knows! I have just finished a novel of the day—"The Missionary," by Miss Owenson.<sup>2</sup> It dwells on ideas which when young I dwelt on with enthusiasm, now I laugh at the weakness which is past. . . . "The Curse of Kehama," which you will have, is my most favorite poem; yet there is a great error—*faith* in the character of the divine Kailay. . . . Yet I forgot . . . I intended to mention to you something essential. I recommend reason.—Why? Is it because, since I have devoted myself unreservedly to its influencing, I have never felt *happiness*? I have rejected all fancy, all imagination; I find that all pleasure resulting to self is thereby completely annihilated. I am led into this egotism, that you may be clearly aware of the nature of reason, as it affects me. I am sincere: will you comment upon this?

Adieu. A picture of Christ hangs opposite in my room: it is well done, and has met my look at the conclusion of this. Do not believe but that I am sincere . . . but am I not too prolix?

Yours most sincerely,

PERCY SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],  
Horsham, June Eleven, 1811,  
Miss HITCHENER,  
Hurstpierpoint,  
Brighton.

[Franked by]  
T. SHELLEY.

<sup>1</sup> Letter torn here.

<sup>2</sup> Sydney Owenson, afterwards Lady Morgan, 1783?-1859, an Irish novelist of considerable repute in her day. She began with a volume of poems in 1801, which was followed by "The Wild Irish Girl," 1806, "The Missionary," published by Stockdale in 1811, and many other novels, books of travel, and an autobiography. She married Sir Thomas Charles Morgan, a physician, in 1812. See another reference to "the Missionary," pp. 103-4, 109.



56. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG  
(York)

FIELD PLACE, HORSHAM,

[June 16, 1811.]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I wish I thought as you do ; but I cannot ; it is all in vain. Unwilling as I am, conviction stares me in my face, and mocks my lingering credulity. Oh ! that you were here ! That artifice the most subtle, of which degraded beings are capable, has been used, I doubt not ; but although this tallies with the wishes of the artificers, a very different cause from their machinations effected it. A change, a great and important change, has taken place in my sister. Every little action, which formerly used to be so eloquent ; every look, which was wont to be so expressive of openness, are enlisted in the service of prejudice. All is studied *art* ; it has superseded, not combined with, nature. It is in vain that you try to persuade me to deceive myself longer. Your letter came this morning ; I burnt that one of mine. I shuddered even to look at a page of it ; the flames destroyed it. Your letter came ; the experiment you recommend has been tried within these few days, repeatedly, but without the slightest effect. Scorn the most virulent, neglect and affected pity for my madness, are all that I can obtain in reply. "You and your mad friend ! Those, whom I have seen, and who have seen me, make but little excuse for your folly." This is all that I could hear ; nothing else she would say. Then, far from being in the least affected by all I can say of my vexation, her spirits are uncommonly lively. I sometimes attempt the same liveliness, to see if congeniality even in folly would effect anything. No ; even this is in vain ; she is then, and then only, constantly silent. Oh ! my friend, who is likeliest to be right ? he who muses at a distance on the abstract idea of perfection, that I once dreamed, annexing it to a being whom one present cannot attribute it to ?—one, too,

who is, I may add, passionately prejudiced to that side of the question, the truth of which he has not admitted, or rather rejected deliberately.

I shall see you in July. I am invited to Wales<sup>1</sup>, but I shall go to York: what shall we do? How I long again for your conversation! The ideas here rise in solitude; they pass through a mind as solitary; unheeded, gloomy retrospection introduces them—anticipation even gloomier bids them depart to make way for others; these will on; still, still will they urge their course, till Death closes all. Wherefore should we linger? Unhappiness, disappointment, enthusiasm, and subsequent apathy follow our steps. Would it not be a general good to all human beings that I should make haste away? So you stay, stay, to make thousands happy: *one* is unworthy of you; and all my wishes are closed, since I have seen that union impossible and unjust, which once was my fondest vision. For myself, I know what an unstable, deceitful thing Love is; but still did I wish to involve myself in the pleasing delusion. The mist dissipates, the light is strong and clear; I am not blind, nor are you;—shall I be? It is neither to my own, nor to the being's happiness which I desired, that I should longer continue so! Where is *she* whom I adored? Alas! Where is virtue? Where is perfection? Where I cannot reach. Is there another existence? No! Then I can never reach it. Is there another existence? Yes! Then I shall live there, rendering and rendered happy.

Perhaps the flowers think like this; perhaps they moralize upon their state, have their attachments, their pursuits of virtue; adore, despond, hope, despise. Alas! then do we, like them, perish; or do they, likewise, live for ever?

But am I not a *philosopher*? Do I not pursue virtue, for virtue's sake? Why, then, do I wander wildly? Why

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<sup>1</sup> Either to the house of his cousin, Mr. Thomas Grove, or to that of Mr. Westbrook at Aberystwyth. See pp. 102, 113.

do I write madly ? Why has sleep forsaken me ? Why are you and my sister for ever present to my mind ? Except when selfishness bids me start at what I am now—at what I once was—Adieu !

I am going to take the sacrament. In spite of my melancholy reflections, the idea rather amuses and soothes me. You shall hear from me soon again. I write very often, but have not always courage to send my letters.—Believe me,

Your's ever affectionately,  
P. B. S.

[Addressed outside],  
Horsham, June Sixteen, 1811.  
T. J. HOGG, Esq.,  
Mrs. DOUGHTY'S,  
Coney Street,  
[Franked by] York.  
T. SHELLEY.

57. TO ELIZABETH HITCHENER  
(Hurstpierpoint)

FIELD PLACE [HORSHAM],  
June 20, 1811.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Your letter, though dated the 14th, has not reached me until this moment. "Reason sanctions an aberration from reason." I admit it, or rather on some subjects I conceive it to command a dereliction of itself. . . . What I mean by this is an habitual analysis of our own thoughts. It is this habit, acquired by length of solitary labour, never then to be shaken off which induces gloom, which deprives the being thus affected of any anticipation or retrospection of happiness, and leaves him eagerly in pursuit of virtue, yet (apparent paradox !) pursuing it without the weakest stimulus. . . . It is this then against which I intended to caution you, this is the tree of which it is dangerous to eat, but which I have fed upon to satiety. . . . We look around us . . . we find that we exist, we find ourselves

reasoning upon the mystery which involves our being . . . we see virtue and vice, we see light and darkness, each is separate, distinct ; the line which divides them is glaringly perceptible ; yet how racking it is to the soul, when enquiring into its own operations, to find that perfect virtue is very far from attainable, to find reason tainted by feeling, to see the mind when analysed exhibit a picture of irreconcilable inconsistencies, even when perhaps a moment before, it imagined that it had grasped the fleeting Phantom of virtue. But let us dismiss the subject. . . . It is still my opinion, for reasons before mentioned, that *Christianity* strongly militates with virtue. . . . Both yourself and Lyttelton are guilty of a mistake of the term *Christian*. A Christian is a follower of the religion which has constantly gone by the name of Christianity, as a Mahometan is of Mahometanism . . . each of these professors ceases to belong to the sect which either word means, when they set up a doctrine of their own, irreconcilable with that of either religion, except in a few instances in which common and self-evident morality coincides with its tenets. It is then *morality*, virtue which they set up as the criterion of their actions, and not the *exclusive* doctrine preached by the founder of any religion.—Why ! your religion agrees as much with Bramah, Zoroaster, or Mahomet, as with Christ. Virtue is self-evident, consequently I act in unison with its dictates, where the doctrines of Christ do not differ from virtue ; *there* I follow *them*. Surely you *then* follow virtue, or you *equally follow Bramah and Mahomet as Christ*. . . . Your Christianity, therefore, *does not* interfere with virtue ; and why ? Because it is not Christianity ! . . .

Yet you still appear to court the delusion, how is this ? Do I know you as well as I know myself ? . . . Then it is that this religion promises a future state, which otherwise were a matter *at least of doubt*. Let us consider. A false view of any subject when a true one is attainable, were *best* avoided, inasmuch as truth and falsehood are in themselves good and bad. . . . All that natural reason enables us



to discover, is that we now *are*, that there was a time when we were not; that the moment even when *now* we are reasoning is a point before and after which is *eternity*. . . . Shall we sink into the nothing from whence we have arisen? . . . But could we have arisen from nothing? We put an acorn into the ground. In process of time it modifies the particles of earth, air and water by infinitesimal division, so as to produce an oak. That power which makes it to be this oak, we may call its *vegetative principle*, symbolizing with the animal principle, or soul of animated existence. . . . An hundred years pass. The oak moulders in putrefaction—it ceases to be what it is; its *soul* is gone. Is then soul annihilable? Yet one of the properties of animal soul is consciousness of identity. If this is destroyed, in consequence the *soul* (whose essence this is) must perish. But as I conceive (and as is certainly capable of demonstration) that nothing can be annihilated, but that everything appertaining to nature, consisting of constituent parts infinitely divisible, is in a continual change, then do I suppose—and I think I have a right to draw this inference—that neither will soul perish; that in a future existence it will lose all consciousness of having formerly lived elsewhere,—will begin life anew, possibly under a shape of which we have now no idea. But we have no right to make hypotheses—this is not one: at least I flatter myself that I have kept clear of supposition.

What think you of the bubbling *brooks* and *mossy banks* at Carlton House,<sup>1</sup>—the *allées vertes*, etc.? It is said that

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<sup>1</sup> The Prince Regent's *fête*, described as on a scale "of unprecedented magnificence," which was given at Carlton House on June 19, 1811. An account of the preparations for the *fête* is given in the *Morning Chronicle* of June 15, 1811. The same paper, in the issue for June 21, contains, in a long description of the banquet, the following passages: "His Royal Highness The Prince Regent entered the State apartments about a quarter past nine o'clock, dressed in a scarlet coat, most richly and elegantly ornamented in a very novel style with gold lace, with a brilliant star of the Order of the Garter. . . . The conservatory presented the fine effect of a lofty aisle in an ancient cathedral. . . . The grand table extended

this entertainment will cost £120,000. Nor will it be the last bauble which the nation must buy to amuse this overgrown bantling of Regency. How admirably this growing spirit of ludicrous magnificence tallies with the disgusting splendours of the stage of the Roman Empire which preceded its destruction! Yet here are a people advanced in intellectual improvement wilfully rushing to a revolution, the natural death of all great commercial empires, which must plunge them in the barbarism from which they are slowly arising.

"Don Roderick" is not yet come out, when it is you shall see it.—Adieu.

Yours most sincerely,  
PERCY SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],  
Miss HITCHENER,  
Hurstpierpoint,  
Brighton,  
Sussex.

### 58. TO EDWARD FERGUS GRAHAM

[Undated. Apparently after June 19, 1811.]

If Graham, within that democratical bosom of thine, *yet* lingers a spark of loyalty, if a true and firm king's man ever found favour in thy sight, if thou art not totally hardened to streamlets, whose mossy banks invite the

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the whole length of the conservatory, and across Carlton House to the length of 200 feet. . . . Along the centre of the table, about six inches above the surface, a canal of pure water continued flowing from a silver fountain, beautifully constructed at the head of the table. Its faintly waving, artificial banks were covered with green moss and aquatic flowers, gold and silver fish, gudgeons, etc., were seen to swim and sport through the bubbling current, which produced a pleasing murmur when it fell, and formed a cascade at the outlet. At the head of the table above the fountain sat his Royal Highness the Prince Regent, on a throne of crimson velvet, trimmed with gold. The throne commanded a view of the company," consisting of, among other persons of distinction, the Bourbon Princes. Shelley again refers to the banquet in the following letter to Graham.

repose of the wanderer. . . . If, I repeat, yet thou lovest thy rulers, and kissest the honeyed rod :—Then—Graham do I conjure thee, by the great George our King, by our noble Prince Regent and our inimitable Commander-in-Chief, then do I conjure thee by Mrs. Clarke, the Duke of Kent and Lord Castlereagh, together with Lord Grenville, that thou wilt assist me, (as heretofore thou didst promise) in my loyal endeavour to magnify, if magnification be possible, our Noble Royal Family. High let them soar . . . high as the expanse of the empyrean, and may no invidious louse dare to interrupt the reveries of frensied enthusiasm.—In fine Græme, thou hast an harp of fire and I a pen of honey. Let then the song roll . . . wide let it roll . . . Take thou thy tuning fork . . . for the ode is coming—lo ! Fargy thou art as the bard of old, I as the poet of other times. . . . When kings murdered men ; then was the lay of praise poured upon their ears . . . when adulation fled afar, and truth, white-robed seraph, descended to whisper into royal ears. . . . They were not so rude as to say "Thou Tyrant." No ! nor will I . . . see if I do.

PHILOBASILEUS.

[Outside the sheet is written this version of the Marseillaise :—]

Tremble kings despised of man !  
 Ye traitors to your Country,  
 Tremble ! Your parricidal plan  
 At length shall meet its destiny . . .  
 We all are soldiers fit to fight,  
 But if we sink in glory's night  
 Our mother EARTH will give ye new,  
 The brilliant pathway to pursue  
 Which leads to DEATH or VICTORY.

### 59. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG

(York)

FIELD PLACE [HORSHAM],

June 21, 1811.

DEAREST FRIEND,

I shall be with you in three weeks ; possibly less. Take lodgings for me at York ; if possible at Mrs. Doughty's.

It is best to be beforehand, as lodgings may be scarce. What pleasure is even the anticipation of an unrestrained converse ! I shall leave Field-place in a fortnight. Old Westbrook has invited me to accompany him and his daughters to a house they have at Aberystwith, in Wales. I shall stay about a week with him in town ; then I shall come to see you, and get lodgings.

How I wish that I could think exactly like you ; that I could effectually imitate your sentiments—sentiments which inspire language that acts almost like magic. When I read your letters, I think exactly, completely like you ; I wonder, I am shocked at my own depravity, in doubting what then appears so evident—yet how evident !

I lay down your letter, I look around me, I consider, I behold the true state of the case. Machinations have indeed succeeded, but they are the machinations of worldly interest. It is true ; it is true, I am on the spot, I observe it ; I am not only cool, but most violently prejudiced to that opinion, against which now conviction presses.

Yet how is this ? Fallen as she is, I almost think that I could participate in her views ; that I could adjust the glittering tinsel ornament of anticipated matrimonialism ; that I could, like a fashionable brother, act as a jackal for husbands. Yet no ; this were too much. Anything but this last, this only severe trial of prejudiced attachment ! But yet, I could watch her steps ; and even in this degraded state could I essay to minister to her happiness, even when she became bound to some fool in a bond fit only for a Jewess ; even then I could rack my phiz into a smile to please her. But this must not be. I am not thus to be sacrificed ; and much as I wish to think like you, yet I think it were imbecile to model my opinion upon yours in that only point, where there are many chances for my being right, were I the least enlightened of men—many chances for your being wrong, although being what you are. On every other point, I believe that my opinion is yours ; wholly unreservedly yours. It is a sacrifice which I



acknowledge is due to your superiority, where we have opportunities of having an equal view of the contested subject. But here! Do you not see you are under the influence of a tyrannical preconception, which you acknowledge increases somewhat under all these disadvantages?

Surely a man under a misleading preconception is not a judge of the merits of its object, particularly when these merits are principally founded on two, or three, poems, *confessedly* not the subjects of universal approbation, founded on the testimony of a brother ardently prejudiced: *he then the sport of unreflecting sensation, alive to enthusiasm the most irrational*; he than whom the gale that blows was not more variable in anything, but friendship;—on the testimony of one who seized on some detached, noble sentiments, and then ascribed to her, whose they were, perfection, divinity—all the properties which the wildest religious devotee ascribes to the Deity, whom he adores. Had I *then* been sacrificing at the altar of the Indian Camdeo, the God of mystic love; you, I am sure, will never become an unreflecting votary at its shrine. But I consider, I remember: there is one point of sympathy between you. *Matrimony*, I know, is a word dear to you;—does it vibrate in unison with the hidden strings of rapture—awaken divine anticipation? Is it not the most horrible of all the means which the world has had recourse to, to bind the noble to itself? Yet this is the subject of her constant and *pointed* panegyric. It is in vain that I seek to talk to her. It is in vain that I represent, or rather endeavour to represent, the futility of the world's opinion.

“This then, is the honourable advice of a brother!”  
“It is the disinterested representation of a friend!” To which unanswered, followed a sneer, and an affected sportiveness of gaiety that admitted of no reply.

Have you read a new novel, “The Missionary,” by Miss Owenson? It is a divine thing—Luxima, the Indian

priestess, were it possible to embody such a character, is *perfect*. "The Missionary" has been my companion for some time ; I advise you to read it. How much I admire the sentiments in your tale ! You give up the world ; you resign *it*, and all its vanities. You are right, and so do it ! Political, or literary, ambition is VICE. Nothing but one thing is virtue.—Adieu !

Your eternal Friend.

Yet I should almost regret your tale ! How I wish you could send me the MSS. ; but perhaps it would not be prudent ; it might miscarry.

60. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG

(York)

FIELD PLACE [HORSHAM],

SUNDAY, June 23, 1811.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

You appear at last rational. I can find an excuse for madness, because I myself am often mad ; but I am better pleased when I can pay the tribute of merited applause to *reason*, exerted, *too*, under discouraging circumstances. Your letter this morning betrays very much of the latter. You no longer blindly consider scepticism as *blasphemy* ; you are sensible that what is human *may* be imperfect. From the vivid nature of the feelings which human beings excited, you are unwilling to admit it. You do right then ; you act reasonably. I rejoice that you are resolved to think for yourself. I rejoice that you have at length fixed a criterion by which you may be decided on this interminable subject.

Come, then, my dear friend : happy, *most* happy, shall I be if you will share my little study ; happy that you come on an errand so likely to soothe me, and restore my peace. There are two rooms in this house, which I have taken exclusively to myself ; my sister *will* not enter them, and

no one else *shall* : these you shall inhabit with me. You must content yourself to sleep upon a mattress ; and you will be like a State prisoner. You must only walk with me at midnight, for fear of discovery. My window commands a view of the lawn, where you will frequently see an object that will amply repay your journey—the object of my fond affections.<sup>1</sup> Time and opportunity must effect that in my favour with [her ?]<sup>2</sup>, which entreaties cannot ; indeed, I do not think it advisable to say too much on the subject ; but more when we meet.

Do not trouble yourself with any baggage ; I have plenty of clean things for you.

The mail will convey you from York to London, whence the Horsham coach will bring you to Horsham ; (news !) there I will meet you at midnight, whence you shall be conveyed to your apartment.

Come, then, I entreat you ; I will return with you to York. I almost *insist on your coming*. I shall fully expect you.

Yours most affectionately.

# 61. TO ELIZABETH HITCHENER

(London)

FIELD PLACE [HORSHAM],

June 25, 1811.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Do not speak any more of my time thrown away, or you will compel me in my own defence, to say things, which although they could not share in the nature, would participate in the appearance of compliment. What you say of the fallen state of Man, I will remark upon. . . . Man is fallen . . . how is he fallen ? You see a thing imperfect

<sup>1</sup> This “mad” plan of Shelley’s to exhibit his sister Elizabeth to Hogg, whose union he desired, was of course never put into practice. Elizabeth Shelley died unmarried in 1831.

<sup>2</sup> Hogg prints “him,” but “her” would seem to be the appropriate word.

and diminutive, but you cannot infer that it had degenerated to this state, without first proving that it had anteriorly existed in a perfect state. Apply this rule, the accuracy of which is unquestionable, to Man. Look at History, even the earliest, what does it tell you of Man? An ancient tradition recorded in the Bible, upon the truth or falsehood of which this depends, tells you that Man once existed in a superior state . . . but how are you to believe *this*? how in short is this to be urged as a proof of the truth of the Scriptures, which *itself* depends upon the previously demonstrated truth or fallacy of *them*? . . . You look around, you say, and see in everything a wonderful harmony conspicuous. How know you this? Might not some animal, the victim of man's capricious tyranny, *itself possibly* the capricious tyrant of another, reason thus? "How wretched, how peculiarly wretched is our state, in man all is harmony, their buildings arise in method, their society is united by bonds of indissolubility. . . . All nature but that of *horses*, is harmonical; and *he* is born to misery only because he *is* a horse." . . . Yet this reasoning is *yours*. Surely this applies to all nature, surely this may be called harmony, but then it is the harmony of irregular confusion, which equalizes everything by being itself unequal, wherever it acts. . . .

This brings me again to the point which I aim at: the eternal existence of Intellect. . . . You have read Locke. You are convinced that there are no innate ideas, and that you do not always think when asleep. . . . Yet, let me enquire: in these moments of intellectual suspension do you suppose that the soul is annihilated? You cannot suppose it, knowing the infallibility of the rule—"From nothing, nothing can come: to nothing, nothing can return;" as, by this rule, it could not be annihilated, or if annihilated could not be capable of resuscitation. This brings me to the point. Those around the lifeless corpse are perfectly aware that *it* thinks not: at least they are aware that when scattered thro' all the changes which matter undergoes, it



cannot then *think*. You have witnessed one suspension of intellect in dreamless sleep . . . you witness another in Death. From the first, you well know that you cannot infer any diminution of intellectual force. How contrary then to all analogy to infer annihilation from Death, which you cannot prove suspends for a moment the force of mind. . . This is not hypothesis, this is not assumption, at least I am not aware of the admission of either. Willingly would I exclude both—would influence *you* to their total exclusion. . . . Yet examine this argument with *your* reason, tell me the result. . . . You wish to “pass among those who, *like you*, have deceived themselves.” I defy you to produce to me one who like you has deceived herself. Deceive the world like yourself, and *I* will no longer object to the immoral influence of Christianity; in short, let the world be Christians, like you. . . let them not be *Christians*, and they would *not* be *Christians*. . . . *Atheism* appears a terrific monster at a distance; dare to examine it, look at its companions . . . it loses half its terrors. In short, treat the word *Atheism* as you have done that of *Christianity*: it is not then much. I do not place your wish for justification to prejudice, but to the highest the noblest of motives. You have named your God. The worship of *that* God is clear, self-evident, perspicuous: it alone ennobles no absurdities, it alone is unceremonious, it alone refuses to contradict natural analogies, can be the subject of no disputes, the countenancer of no misconceptions. . . . Since we conversed on the subject, I have seen no reason to change my political opinions. . . . In *theology*, enquiries into our intellect, it[s] eternity or perishability,—I advance with caution and circumspection. I pursue it in the privacy of retired thought, or the interchange of friendship. . . . but in politics . . . *here* I am enthusiastic. I have reasoned, and my reason has brought me on this subject to the end of my enquiries. I am no aristocrat, nor any “*crat*” at all; but vehemently long for the time when man may *dare* to live in accordance with *Nature* and Reason,

in consequence [*sic*]<sup>1</sup> with Virtue. . . to which I firmly believe that Religion, its establishment, Polity, and its establishments, are the formidable, though destructible, barriers. We heard from the Captain the other day : I am happy to find that my aunt is recovering. On Monday I shall be in London on my way to Wales, where I purpose to spend the summer. My excursion will be on foot for the purpose of better remarking the manners and dispositions of the peasantry. I shall call on you in London, and write to you from the resting-places of my movements.

Your sincere Friend,

PERCY SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],

Horsham, June Twenty-six, 1811.

Miss HITCHENER,

Mr. PUFFERS,

No. 23 New Millman Street,

near the Foundling,

London.

[Franked by] T. SHELLEY.

## 62. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG

(York)

[FIELD PLACE,

about June 27th, 1811.]

I wrote to you on Sunday. Reason have you to say that I was unreasonable. I was mad ! You know that very little sets my horrid spirits in motion. I drank a glass or two of wine at my mother's instigation, then began raving. She, to quiet me, gave me pens, ink, and paper, and I wrote to you. Elizabeth is, indeed, an unworthy companion of the Muses. I do not rest much on her poetry now. Miss Philipps<sup>2</sup> betrayed twice the genius : greater amiability, if to affect the feeling is a proof of an excess of the latter. I am sure you cannot deny that you are unprejudiced on this head.

I am a perfect hermit : not a being to speak with ! I sometimes exchange a word with my mother on the subject

<sup>1</sup> Perhaps Shelley meant to write *consonance*.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 78.

of the weather, upon which she is irresistibly eloquent ; otherwise all is deep silence ! I wander about this place, walking all over the grounds, with no particular object in view. I cannot write, except now and then to you—sometimes to Miss Westbrooks. My hand begins to hurry, and I am tired and ennuied. The only thing that has interested me, if I except your letters, has been one novel. It is Miss Owenson's " Missionary," an Indian tale ; will you read it ? It is really a divine thing ; Luxima, the Indian, is an angel. What a pity that we cannot incorporate these creations of fancy ; the very thoughts of them thrill the soul ! Since I have read this book, I have read no other. But I have thought strangely ! I transcribe for you a strange mélange of maddened stuff, which I wrote by the midnight moon last night.

Sweet star, which gleaming o'er the darksome scene  
Through fleecy clouds of silvery radiance flyest,  
Spanglet of light on evening's shadowy veil,  
Which shrouds the day-beam from the waveless lake,  
Lighting the hour of sacred love ; more sweet  
Than the expiring morn-star's paly fires,  
Sweet star ! When wearied Nature sinks to sleep,  
And all is hushed,—all, save the voice of Love,  
Whose broken murmurings swell the balmy blast  
Of soft Favonius, which at intervals  
Sighs in the ear of stillness, art thou aught but  
Lulling the slaves of interest to repose  
With that mild, pitying gaze ! Oh, I would look  
In thy dear beam till every bond of sense  
Became enamoured——

Hopes, that swell in youthful breasts,  
Leave they this, the waste of time ?  
Love's rose a host of thorns invests ;  
Cold, ungenial is the clime,  
Where its honours blow.  
Youth says, The purple flowers are mine  
Which die the while they glow.

Dear the boon to Fancy given,  
Retracted whilst it's granted :  
Sweet the rose which lives in heaven,  
Although on earth 'tis planted,  
Where its honours blow,  
While by earth's slaves the leaves are riven  
Which die the while they glow.

Age cannot Love destroy,  
 But perfidy can blast the flower,  
 Even when in most unwary hour  
 It blooms in Fancy's bower.  
 Age cannot Love destroy,  
 But perfidy can rend the shrine  
 In which its vermeil splendours shine.

*Ohe ! jam satis dementia !* I hear you exclaim.

I have been thinking of Death and Heaven for four days. What is the latter ? 'Shall we set off ? Is there a future life ? Whom shall we injure by departing ? Should we not benefit some ? I was thinking last night, when from the summer-house I saw the moon just behind one of the chimneys, if she alone were to witness our departure ? But I do not talk thus, or even think thus, when we are together. How is that ? I scarce dare then, but now I dare ?

I shall see you in three weeks. I am coming to York, in my way to Wales ; where possibly I shall not go. Be that as it may, you shall see me. I intend to pedestrianize. The post-fellow wants the letter.

Believe me your most affectionate.

You will hear on Monday.

63. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG  
 (York)

CUCKFIELD,  
 July 1, 1811.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have despatched a letter to my sister, inclosing your last letter to me. I shall be there on Sunday. I hope I shall have a favourable answer.

If her interest in me has weight ; if she regards me as a friend and brother, she cannot refuse. But no ! This coercion ! You shall hear on Sunday.



64. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG  
(York)

FIELD PLACE,  
July 4, 1811.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I am surprised! For the sake of everything for which we live, listen to reason. If you will not listen to me, see the chapter in *Locke*, which F[aber] ought to have read, and profited by.

What is Enthusiasm, whether in religion, politics, or morality? all equally, inextricably fatuous; yours is in the last. You seek the happiness of another, under an idea that she is most amiable. Even admitting the last, is it not wrong when you see that you cannot contribute to her happiness, to render yourself unfit to do so to another? But do I not admit this? And yet it seems false. Who, surely, is the better judge? *you*—who never beheld her, never heard her converse, and, in addition to this—or *I*, who—still I am confessedly strongly *prejudiced*—prejudiced like religious votaries, who reason, whilst they can, and when that ceases to be possible, they *feel*. From this last there is *no* appeal. Certainly I do not mean to imitate these. And I still ask, who is the better judge? I, as I must be like one of these, or you, dispassionate, cool;—cool you cannot but be, and probably dispassionate. Little as you may be disposed to credit my feelings concerning *ἀφιελαντία*, I have here no interest to act otherwise than I say. How, then, do I still persist in——. I own it; it was the fondest wish of my heart, and bitterly was I disappointed at its annihilation. I own it: I desired, eagerly desired to see myself and her irrevocably united by the rites of the Church, but where the high priest would have been Love<sup>1</sup>; I pictured to myself Elysium

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<sup>1</sup> It is important to state in regard to this passage, which was supposed by some to have been misprinted by Hogg, (or to have had some mysterious meaning), that it was proved by Professor Dowden to Mr. Rossetti "that there is no misprint in this letter,

in beholding my only perfect one daring the vain world, smiling at its silly forms, setting an example of perfection to an universe. I do not estimate, as you know, from relationship: I am cool, I hope. I should now grieve to see myself sacrificed, when there *may* exist a less imperfect being, and I might be perhaps considered as not wholly unworthy of her.

You do not flatter; you do not temporise; you are as severe with me as *you* can be. I own I cannot bear, you tell me, to see you sacrificing yourself, and everyone who really esteems you. I write to-morrow.

Your ever affectionate.

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and also no mystery about it. Shelley, an avowed enemy of the legal marriage-bond, simply says that he would have wished Hogg and Elizabeth to unite without marriage, and would wish to act in like manner himself when the time should come." Mr. W. M. Rossetti's "Memoir of Shelley," 1886, p. iii. I quote Professor Dowden's explanation of this passage from the *Athenæum* of May 14, 1887: "Shelley's words and my interpretation are as follows: 'I desired, eagerly desired,' writes Shelley, 'to see myself and her [his sister Elizabeth] irrevocably united by the rites of the Church, but where the high priest would have been love'; *i.e.*, Shelley, looking back at the failure of his own love affair with his cousin, Harriet Grove, and the more recent failure of his plan for Hogg's union with his sister Elizabeth, says: 'My eager desire was to see myself united [he avoids the word *married*, which might imply a ceremony] to my cousin, and see my sister united to you, Hogg, each without vow or ceremony.' 'The institution of marriage,' Godwin had written, 'is a system of fraud. . . . Marriage is a law and the worst of laws.' Shelley had accepted Godwin's principles, and desired to see them carried into act. The reviewer speaks of my skating here 'over thin ice.' No; I tread on solid ground, and Mr. Rossetti, whose candour the reviewer commends, in rejecting the odious theory is by my side."

### III. HARRIET WESTBROOK

July 15—October 28, 1811

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SHELLEY at Cwm Elan—"Mr. Peyton"—On Equality—F. D. Browne—Burdon's Poem—Shelley's Mother—Stockdale's Account—Harriet Westbrook—Thoughts on Matrimony—Shelley's Marriage—At York—At Cuckfield—"Sister of my Soul"—The Marriage-Settlement—Harriet's School-days—The Duke of Norfolk.

#### 65. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG

(York)

[Postmark, RHAYADER.]

[? July 15, 1811.]

I am just arrived<sup>1</sup>. I have only time to say that I am most sincerely yours, and I will explain on Wednesday why I could not come to York. No post here but three times a-week.

P. B. S.

#### 66. TO ELIZABETH HITCHENER

(London)

CWM ELAN, RHAYADER,  
RADNORSHIRE,  
SOUTH WALES.

[Postmark—15th July, 1811.]

MY DEAR MADAM,

Your letter has just reached me, or rather has been given

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<sup>1</sup> At Cwm Elan, an estate of ten thousand acres which had been purchased by Shelley's cousin, Thomas Grove. This place, of which Shelley had heard much from Harriet Grove, and which he greatly desired to see, is situated five miles south-east of Rhayader, in Radnorshire.

to me after my recovery from a short but violent nervous illness. It was occasioned by several nights of sleeplessness, and days of pressing and urgent business; nothing else could have prevented my calling on you in town, but my occupation was of such a nature as would neither admit of delay or rest, and Stoic as I profess myself, whilst yet this chain of clay fetters our nobler energies, it will at times subdue them, it will at times remind us, and that forcibly, how mutually dependent on each other are mind and body. . . . Well here I now am, and shall postpone the pleasure of your conversation, tho' let me hope not of your correspondence, until the period of my return to Sussex. I hope I am superior to etiquette, indeed if I am not I bely my own professions, and daring to be free court slavery. . . . But this is *not* my disposition, and when I say the "pleasure of your correspondence," I mean to say that the ideas which those words excite are actually present. —Did you observe in the papers an account of the trial of a wretch at Tortola for the *murder* of his *slave*: if not, read it, and remark his address to the jury . . . "I have a *proper sense of religion*, and I fear not." This man's cruelties might have made Nero triumph in his comparative humanity, yet "he fears not." Is this criterion then so sure to supersede that of self-evident morality as to make a villain exult in death like Brutus? Surely this teaches us two things—that Religion is bad for man; that the exultation of Brutus will last, that of the tyrant cannot! I met with a fine passage the other day in Helvétius, a French writer. "Modes of worship differ, they are therefore the work of men—Morality is accordant, *universal*, and uniform, therefore it is the Work of God"—or, as I should say, it is *Morality* which I cannot but consider as synonymous with the Deist's God. This country of Wales is excessively grand; rocks piled on each other to tremendous heights, rivers formed into cataracts by their projections, and valleys clothed with woods, present an appearance of enchantment. But *why* do they enchant—*why* is it more



affecting than a plain, it cannot be innate, is it acquired ? Thus does knowledge lose all the pleasure which involuntarily arises by attempting to arrest the fleeting phantom as it passes . . . vain, almost like the chemist's ether it evaporates under our observation : it flies from all but the slaves of passion and sickly sensibility who will not analyse a feeling.

I will relate you an anecdote, it is a striking one ; the only adventure I have met with here. My window is over the kitchen, in the morning I threw it up, and had hardly finished dressing when " for Charity's dear sake " met my ear. These words were pronounced with such sweetness that on turning round I was surprised to find them uttered by an old beggar, to whom in a moment the servant brought some meat. I ran down and gave him something :—he appeared extremely grateful. I tried to enter into conversation with him . . . in vain. I followed him a mile asking a thousand questions. At length I quitted him, finding by this remarkable observation that perseverance was useless. " I see by your dress that you are a rich man. They have injured me and mine a million times—you appear to be well intentioned, but I have no security of it while you live in such a house as that, or wear such clothes as those. It would be charity to quit me."

Now adieu.

Believe me

Yours most sincerely,

PERCY SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],

Miss HITCHENER,

Mr. PUFFER'S,

near the Foundling,

London.

[Re-directed, not in Shelley's handwriting],

Miss HITCHENER,

Hurstpierpoint,

near Brighton.

## 67. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG

(York)

CWM ELAN, RHAYADER.

[No date. ? July 22, 1811.]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

John Grove has sent one of your letters ; I fancy the *last*. I am now at Rhayader. The post comes in here but three times a-week, and goes out two hours after its arrival. Cwm Elan is five miles thence, and I have ridden to Rhayader, and now write in the post-office. Pray write. Confide in me. Believe that I am yours most sincerely. What have you to say ? What, have you no secret ? Write ; you know that everything which you confide will be for ever held in the inviolable confidence of friendship. It would be a great injustice to suppose that my own will detained me from York. Nothing but absolute and positive necessity could have superseded my determined intention.

You will hear from me on Thursday, at least, I shall write then. Adieu !

Your eternally faithful,

P. B. S.

Miss Westbrook, Harriet, has advised me to read Mrs. Opie's "Mother and Daughter."<sup>1</sup> She has sent it hither, and has desired my opinion with earnestness. What is this tale ? But I shall read it to-night.

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<sup>1</sup> Amelia Opie's "Adeline Mowbray, or the Mother and Daughter," 1804.

68. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG  
(York)

CWM ELAN, RHAYADER, RADNORSHIRE.

[No date. ? July 25, 1811.]

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

I had a letter from my father ; all is found out about my inviting you to Horsham, and my proposed journey to York, which is thereby for a while prevented. God send he does not write to your father ; it would annoy him. I threw cold water on the rage of the old buck. I question whether he has let the family into the secret of his discovery, which must have been *magically* effected.

I had, previously to my intention to coming to York, accepted an invitation of a cousin of mine here to stay a week or two ; whence I intended to proceed to Aberystwith, about thirty miles off. I then changed my mind, in order to accompany you to York. As you made no secret of this, I mentioned in a letter to my father from London that such was my intention. He returned for answer, on the Thursday, that I might go, but that I should have no money from him if I did. The case therefore became one of extreme necessity ; I was forced to submit, and now I am here. Do not think, however, but that I shall come to see you long before you come to reside in London ; but open warfare will never do, and Mr. Peyton, which will be my *nom de guerre*, will easily swallow up Mr. Shelley. I shall keep quiet here for a few weeks.

I have heard of the miscarriage of one of my letters to you, by the pillage of the Rhayader mail. I shall write very often, and enclose Elizabeth's letters, when I have them.

This is most divine scenery ; but all very dull, stale, flat, and unprofitable : indeed, this place is a very great bore.

I shall see the Miss Westbrooks again soon ; they were very well, in Condowell, when I heard last ; they then proceed to Aberystwith, where I shall meet them.

The post here is only three times a-week, and that very uncertain, irregular and unsafe.

Let me hear soon from you. I will write every post-day.

Your most affectionate,

P. B. SHELLEY.

69. TO ELIZABETH HITCHENER

(Hurstpierpoint)

CWM ELAN, RHAYADER,

RADNORSHIRE.

[July 25, 1811.]

MY DEAR MADAM,

Be assured that, as long as you are what you are, as long as I am what I am—which is likely to continue until our *transmigration*—you will always occupy a most exalted place in my warmest esteem. I am no courtier, aristocrat, or loyalist : therefore you may believe that your correspondence would be resigned with the pain of having lost a most valuable thing when I tell you so. I am truly sorry to hear that my aunt has not recovered . . . I shall write to the Captain to-day. . . . You say that equality is unattainable : so, will I observe, is perfection ; yet they both symbolize in their nature, they both demand that an unremitting tendency towards themselves should be made ; and, the nearer society approaches towards this point the happier will it be. No one has yet been found resolute enough in dogmatizing to deny that Nature made man equal ; that society has destroyed this equality is a truth



not more incontrovertible. It is found that the vilest cottager is often happier than the proud lord of his manorial rights. Is it fit that the most frightful passions of human nature should be let loose, by an unnatural compact of society, upon this unhappy aristocrat? Is he not to be pitied when by an hereditary possession of a fortune which if divided would have very different effects, he is as it were predestined to dissipation, ennui, self-reproach, and to crown the climax, a deathbed of despairing inutility? It is often found that the peasant's life is embittered by the commission of crime . . . (yet can we call it crime? certainly when we compare the seizure of a few shillings from the purse of a nobleman to preserve a beloved family from starving, to the destruction which the unrestrained propensities of this nobleman scatter around him, we may almost call it *virtue*). To what cause are we to refer this? The noble has too much, therefore *he* is wretched and wicked, the peasant has too little. . . . Are not then the consequences the same from causes which nothing but *equality* can annihilate? and, altho' you may consider equality as impossible, yet, admitting this, a strenuous tendency towards it appears recommended by the consequent diminution of wickedness and misery which my system holds out. . . . is this to be denied?

Ridicule perfection as impossible. . . . Do more: prove it by arguments which are irresistible. Let the defender of perfection acknowledge their cogency. Still, a strenuous tendency towards this principle, however unattainable, cannot be considered as wrong. You are willing to dismiss for the present the subject of Religion. As to its influence on individuals, we will. But it is so intimately connected with politics, and augments in so vivid a degree the evils resulting from the system before us, that I will make a few remarks on it. Shall I sum up the evidence? It is needless . . . the persecutions against the Christians under the Greek Empire, their energetic retaliations, and burning each other, the excommunications bandied between the

popes of Rome and the patriarchs of Constantinople, their influence upon politics, war, assassination, the Sicilian Vespers, the Massacre of St. Bartholomew, Lord G. Gordon's mob, and the state of Religious things at present, can amply substantiate my assertions. . . . And Liberty!—Poor Liberty! even the religionists who cry so much for thee use thy name but as a mask, that they alone may seize the torch, and show their gratitude by burning their Deliverer. . . . I should doubt the existence of a God who if he cannot command our reverence by *Love*, surely can have no demand upon it, from *Virtue*, on the score of terror. It is this empire of terror which is established by Religion, Monarchy is its prototype, Aristocracy may be regarded as symbolizing with its very essence. They are mixed: one can now scarce be distinguished from the other; and equality in politics, like perfection in morality, appears now far removed from even the visionary anticipations of what is called "the wildest theorist." I, then, am wilder than the wildest. I am happy that you like "*Kéhama*." Is not the chapter where Kailyal despises the leprosy grand? You would like also "*Joan of Arc*," by Southey.—Whenever I have any new books, I will send them to you.

I will write again soon. I now remain, with the highest esteem,

Yours sincerely,

PERCY SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],  
Miss HITCHENER,  
Hurstpierpoint,  
Sussex.

[Postmark], 27 July, 1811.

## 70. TO ELIZABETH HITCHENER

(Hurstpierpoint)

CWM ELAN,

July 26, 1811.

MY DEAR MADAM,

I wrote to you yesterday in a great hurry, at least very much interfered with. I began *politics*, and altho', from the mental discussion which I have given the subject, I do not think my arguments are inconclusive, still they may be obscure.—What I contend for is this.—Were I a moral legislator, I would propose to my followers that they should arrive at the perfection of morality. Equality is natural, at least many evils totally inconsistent with a state which symbolizes with Nature prevail in every system of inequality. I will assume this point, therefore, even although it be your opinion, or *my* opinion that equality is unattainable except by a parcel of peas or beans, still political virtue is to be estimated in proportion as it approximates to this ideal point of perfection, however unattainable.—But what can be worse than the present aristocratical system? Here are in England ten millions, only 500,000 of whom live in a state of ease; the rest earn their livelihood with toil and care.—If therefore these 500,000 aristocrats, who possess resources of various degrees of immensity, were to permit these resources to be resolved into their original stock; that is, entirely to destroy it, if each earned his own living (which I do not see is at all incompatible with the *height* of intellectual refinement, then I affirm that each would be happy and contented, that crime and the temptation to crime would scarcely exist.—“But this paradise is all visionary.”—Why is it visionary? Have you tried? The first inventor of a plough doubtless was looked upon as a mad innovator: he who altered it from its original absurd form doubtless had to contend with great prejudices in its disfavor. But is it not worth while that (altho' it may not be *certain*) the remaining 9,500,000 victims to its infringement [should] make some exertions in favour of a system

evidently founded on the first principles of natural justice ? If two children were placed together in a desert island, and they found some scarce fruit, would not justice dictate an equal division ? If this number is multiplied to any extent of which number is capable, if these children are men, families,—is not justice capable of the same extension and multiplication ? Is it not the same, are not its decrees invariable ? and, for the sake of his earth-formed schemes, has the politician a right to infringe upon that which itself constitutes all right and wrong ? Surely not. I know *why* you differ from me on this point. It is because you suspect yourself of partiality for the cause against which you argue. I must say, my friend and fellow-traveller in the path of truth, that this is wrong. You are unworthy of the suspicion with which you regard yourself. I am now with people who, strange to say, never *think*: I have, however, much more of my own society than of theirs.

Nature is here marked with the most impressive characters of lordliness and grandeur, once I was tremulously alive to tones and scenes . . . the habit of analysing feelings I fear does not agree with this. It is spontaneous, and, when it becomes subject to consideration, ceases to exist. . . . But you do right to indulge feeling where it does not militate with reason : I wish I could too. This valley is covered with trees, so are partly the mountains that surround it. Rocks, piled on each other to an immense height, and clouds intersecting them,—in other places, waterfalls 'midst the umbrage of a thousand shadowy trees, form the principal features of the scenery. I am not wholly uninfluenced by its magic in my lonely walks, but I long for a thunderstorm.

Adieu : let me soon hear from you.

Your most sincere friend,

P. B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],  
Miss HITCHENER,  
Hurstpierpoint,  
Sussex.

[Postmark], 29 July, 1811.



## 71. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG

(York)

CWM ELAN, RHAYADER, RADNORSHIRE,

[No date. ? July 28, 1811.]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

To-morrow I shall hear from you, but cannot be able to answer your letter. The post is here what the waves in hell were to Tantalus.

I have heard from the Westbrooks, and from my mother : the latter cannot yet have received your last letter to me, as epistolary communications take some time in going to Sussex from York via Rhayader.

I have been to church to-day ; they preach partly in Welsh, which sounds most singularly. A christening was performed out of an old broken slop-basin. This country is highly romantic ; here are rocks of uncommon height, and picturesque waterfalls. I am more astonished at the grandeur of the scenery than I expected. I do not *now* much regard it ; I have other things to think of.

I have had no cause to alter my opinion ; I do not think that I am at liberty to entertain any hopes. I suppose, whilst York Minster exists, that you will indulge them yourself on my account.

Now, there is Miss F. D. Browne<sup>1</sup> (certainly a tigress), yet she surpasses my sister in poetical talents—this every dispassionate criticism *must* allow : that lovely extract of her poems certainly surpasses any of Elizabeth's, and it was Elizabeth's poetry that first so strongly attracted my

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<sup>1</sup> Felicia Dorothea Browne (1796-1835), better known as Mrs. Hemans. Her "Poems," printed at Liverpool in 1808 at the age of twelve, were followed the same year by "England and Spain, or Valour and Patriotism." Medwin states that these poems "made a powerful impression on Shelley," who addressed some letters to the youthful poetess, but that her mother wrote to Medwin's father begging him to use his influence with Shelley to stop the correspondence. Medwin adds that Mrs. Hemans in after life was an admirer of Shelley's poetry, and "in some measure modelled her style after his."

attention, charmed, and, as you were pleased to say, bewitched me ; and which you admired, unless you were influenced by the vague, unconnected, prejudiced praises with which *I* would at times speak of Elizabeth.

For the rest, it is *now* far from being *my* wish that you should think more of the past. I foresee that all regrets cherished on that head will end in aggravating disappointment ; I do not say despair, for I have too good an opinion of my firmness to suppose that I would yield to *despair*. Besides, *wherefore* should I love her ? A disinterested appreciation of what is in itself excellent ; this is good, if it is so—but what I felt was a *passion*. It was, I suppose, involuntary : passion can evidently be neither disinterested, or its opposite. It is not, then, the *business* of reason to conquer passion, particularly when I received *all* the evidences of her loveliness from the latter, and *none* from the former. Ought I not to doubt the worthiness of what depends on the mere impulses of the latter, for what could reason have to do with it any more than with peeping at a lady through a window. I do not know, on considering, however, if the lover would not display *more* reason then than at any other period of his passion, since for *once* he consented to refer to the evidence of his senses. Let me *hope* that I shall be dispassionate ; I did *execrate* my existence once, when I first discovered that there was no chance of our being united. To enjoy your society and that of my sister has now for some months been my aim. *She* is not what she was ; you continue the same, and ever may you be so !

I am *here* for the present, absolutely because I have no money to come to York, and because I *must* come there incog. I am what the sailors call banyaning. I do not see a soul ; all is gloomy and desolate. I amuse myself, however, with reading Darwin,<sup>1</sup> climbing rocks, and exploring this scenery. Amusement !

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<sup>1</sup> Erasmus Darwin (1731–1802), the author of “The Botanic Garden,” “The Temple of Nature,” etc.

I have seen the papers, and Burdon's poem.<sup>1</sup> It is certainly admirable as an architectural poem ; but do not let *me* be considered *envious* when I say, that it appears to me to want energy, since the very idea of my being able to write like it is eminently ludicrous. I wonder whether B—— is a fool or a hypocrite ; he *must* be the latter.

Have you read "The Missionary" ? It is a beautiful thing. It is here, and I could not help reading it again ; or do you not read novels ? Adieu !

Your sincere Friend.

## 72. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG

(York)

CWM ELAN, RHAYADER,

[No date. ? July 30, 1811.]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Only two hours elapse between the exit and entrance of the post. Your letter to me was sent to my mother, who is very much interested in you.

I have at this moment no money, as Philipps'<sup>2</sup> and the other debt have drained me ; you will see me when I can get some. Although I am not so degraded as to talk to you of pecuniary obligations, yet is it not almost too bad

<sup>1</sup> Apparently the Oxford Prize-poem by Richard Burdon, of Oriel College, entitled "Parthenon," 1811, which Shelley may have seen in some newspaper. It is reprinted in the collection of Prize Poems.

<sup>2</sup> Philipps' debt. This has been thought to refer to the printer's account for the poems of Janetta Philipps. The debt may, however, have been for the printing of "Original Poetry by Victor and Cazire" and "The Necessity of Atheism," both of which were printed by C. and W. Phillips, of Worthing, although the above spelling of the name is that of the poetess and not of the printers. On the other hand, the sale of the 525 copies to the persons named in the list of subscribers must have well covered the cost of printing the volume. Stockdale, the publisher of the "Original Poetry," says in his *Budget* with reference to the account for printing this book, "I know it was paid."

to subsist on you? No! I must stay here for a short time, because to contend against impossibilities may do for a lover, but will not for a mortal.

In the meantime, believe that I am not inattentive to my own interests. As things have been so quiet, I rather acquiesce in your opinion, that artifice may have been resorted to. As I returned no answer, *my* indiscretion, of which I have given two or three specimens, cannot either substantiate or annihilate his guesses.

I am all solitude, as I cannot call the society here an alternative of it. I must stay here, however, to recruit my finances, compelled now to acknowledge poverty an evil.

Your jokes on Harriet Westbrook amuse me: it is a common error for people to fancy others in their own situation, but if I know anything about love, I am *not* in love. I have heard from the Westbrooks, both of whom I highly esteem.

Adieu! I am going to ride with Mrs. Grove to Rhayader. I will write on Thursday.

Yours sincerely.

73. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG  
(York)

RHAYADER,

[No date, ? August 1, 1811.]

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

I do *not* accuse you of temporizing, or if I did, I retract that accusation. I have not read "Adeline,"<sup>1</sup> but shall, as soon as I can get it. Here one is as remote from the communications of friendship as the business of stupidity; it is a very high price to pay for the exemption from the latter, for which reason, it is my intention, as soon as financial strength will permit me to evacuate these solitudes to come to York.

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<sup>1</sup> See footnote, p. 116.



When I come, I will not come under my own name, it were to irritate my father needlessly ; this is entirely a *philantian* argument, but without the stream, of which he is the fountain head, I could not get on. We must *live*, if we intend to live ; that is, we must eat, drink, and sleep, and money is the necessary procurer of these things.

Your letter was sent to my mother last post-day ; she feels a warm interest in you, as every woman must, and I am well assured that she will do nothing prejudicial to our interests. She is a good, worthy, woman ; and although she may in some cases resemble the fish and pheasant ladies, honoured with your animadversions of this morning, yet there is one altitude which they have attained, to which, I think, she cannot soar—Intolerance. I have heard frequently from her since my arrival here ; she is of opinion that my father could not, by ordinary means have become acquainted with the proposed visit. I regard the whole as a *finesse*, to which I had supposed the Honourable Member's head-piece unequal. But the servants may—No, they do not even know your name.

I have heard from my sister since I came here ; but her letter merely contains an account of a thunderstorm, which demolished a cottage of my father's. I will not, therefore, send it you. Adieu ! Each post-day, till we meet, will carry a letter.

Yours sincerely.

The progress of our novel is but slow ; however, I have written *one* more letter ; it is for *you* to answer it :<sup>1</sup>

“ I find you still obstinate in what *I* call your error, as I am in what you must consider a damnable heterodoxy.

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<sup>1</sup> In Shelley's letter to Hogg (May 15, 1811, p. 77) he alludes to a suggestion of Hogg's, apparently for a joint “composition or *mélange*.” From the above reference and specimen letter that follows, it would seem that the work was already in progress, and had taken the form of a novel, in a series of letters written by Shelley and Hogg, dealing with subjects actually under discussion by the two friends. I can find no other allusions to this work in Shelley's correspondence.

I am truly surprised! The peep at church cannot have influenced you one way or the other; but it *may*; for it is the only sensual intelligence that you have received of this fair one. I cannot call it intellectual, as even in the short view of her face which you had, you cannot pretend to guess her moral qualities; unless you intend to support, that the countenance is the index of the soul, which I cannot suppose you admit. Will you now, coolly, if *possible*, dispassionately, examine your own soul, and that which now seems almost necessarily annexed to its *essence*, your love for Sophia. Trace the grounds on which you love her, the origin of this passion; the things which strengthened, and the things which have weakened it. If you will do this, without either ridiculing my difference of opinion from yours, or employing any kind of declamation, overslurring or sophistry, you will *then*, perhaps, convince me of what you regard as truth founded on proofs of resistless cogency, or, you will come to a knowledge of the incorrectness of your own ideas. Either of these is to be desired, since, if you, or I, be wrong, this error, wherever it lies, will necessarily terminate in disappointment."

## 74. JOHN JOSEPH STOCKDALE

(41 Pall Mall, London)

CWM ELAN, RHAYADER, RADNORSHIRE,

August 1, 1811.

SIR,

Your letter has at length reached me: the remoteness of my present situation must apologize for my apparent neglect. I am sorry to say, in answer to your requisition, that the state of my finances renders immediate payment perfectly impossible. It is my intention at the earliest

period in my power to do so, to discharge your account.<sup>1</sup> I am aware of the imprudence of publishing a book so ill-digested as "St. Irvyne," but are there no expectations of its sale? My studies have, since my writing it, been of a more serious nature. I am at present engaged in completing a series of moral and metaphysical essays—perhaps their copyright would be accepted in lieu of part of my debt?

Sir, I have the honour to be

Your very humble servant,

PERCY B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],

Mr. J. J. STOCKDALE,

41 Pall Mall,

London.

## 75. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG

(York)

[Postmark, Rhayader.]

[No date; probably about August 3, 1811.]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

You will perhaps see me before you can answer this; perhaps not; Heaven knows! I shall certainly come to York, but *Harriet Westbrook* will decide whether now or in three weeks. Her father has persecuted her in a most horrible way, by endeavouring to compel her to go to school. She asked my advice: resistance was the answer, at the

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<sup>1</sup> With regard to this account, Stockdale, writing in his *Budget*, in 1827, testifies to Shelley's "honour and rectitude, and my conviction that he would vegetate, rather than live, to effect the discharge of every honest claim upon him. I will now repeat," he adds, "that such opinion has not been shaken, although I have never received, directly or indirectly, one farthing of my just claim, which, principal and interest together, cannot be less than £300." Poor Stockdale does not seem to have been captivated by the suggestion of "a series of moral and metaphysical essays," but he attempted to realise something from the unsold copies of "St. Irvyne" in 1822, by binding them up with a new title-page bearing that date.

same time that I essayed to mollify Mr. W[estbrook] in vain ! And in consequence of my advice *she* has thrown herself upon *my* protection.

I set off for London on Monday. How flattering a distinction !—I am thinking of ten million things at once.

What have I said ? I declare, quite *ludicrous*.<sup>1</sup> I advised her to resist. She wrote to say that resistance was useless, but that she would fly with me, and threw herself upon my protection.<sup>2</sup> We shall have £200 a year : when we find it run short, we must live, I suppose, upon love ! Gratitude and admiration all demand that I should love her *for ever*. We shall see you at York. I will hear your arguments for matrimonialism, by which I am now almost convinced. I can get lodgings at York, I suppose. Direct to me at Graham's, 18 Sackville Street, Piccadilly.

Your inclosure of £10 has arrived ; I am now indebted to you £30. In spite of philosophy, I am rather ashamed of this unceremonious exsiccation of your financial river. But, indeed, my dear friend, the gratitude which I owe you for your society and attachment ought so far to overbalance this consideration as to leave me nothing but that. I must, however, pay you when I can.

I suspect that the *strain* is gone for ever.<sup>3</sup> This letter

<sup>1</sup> Professor Dowden says ("Life of Shelley," Vol. I, page 174), "the 'ludicrous thing' is that Harriet should have chosen as a protector a youth of nineteen, expelled from College, estranged in some degree from his family, and at the present moment in want of money."

<sup>2</sup> In a letter from Shelley's cousin, Charles H. Grove, printed in Hogg's "Life of Shelley" (Vol. II, p. 534), he says "whilst on the visit [to Cwm Elan] his [Shelley's] continued correspondence with Miss W[estbrook] led to his return to London, and subsequent elopement with her. He corresponded with me, also, during that period, and wrote me a letter concerning what he termed his summons to link his fate with another [in his despair, it would seem, at having lost the love of his cousin, Harriet Grove], closing his communication thus [adapting the words of Macbeth]—

"Hear it not, Percy, for it is a knell,  
Which summons thee to heaven or to hell !"

<sup>3</sup> See p. 67.



will convince you that I am not under the influence of a *strain*.

I am thinking at once of ten million things. I shall come to live near you, as Mr. Peyton.

Ever your most faithful friend,

P. B. S.

I shall be at 18 Sackville Street ; at least direct there. Do not send more cash ; I shall raise supplies in London.

76. TO ELIZABETH HITCHENER  
(Hurstpierpoint)

LONDON,

Aug[ust] 10, 1811.

MY DEAR MADAM,

I understand that there is a letter for me at Cwm Elan. I have not received it. Particular business has occasioned my sudden return. I shall be at Field Place to-morrow, and shall possibly see you before September.

My engagements have hindered much devotion of time to a consideration of the subject of our discussion. I here see palaces the thirtieth part of which would bless with every requisite of habitation their pampered owners . . . theatres converted from schools of morality into places for the inculcation of abandonment of every moral principle, whilst the haughty aristocrat, and the commercial monopolist unite in sanctioning by example the depravities to which the importations of the latter give rise. All monopolies are bad. I do not, however, when condemning commercial aggrandizement, think it in the least necessary to panegyrize hereditary accumulation.—Both are flagrant encroachments on liberty, neither can be used as an antidote for the poison of the other. . . . We will suppose even the *best* aristocrat, yet look at our Noblemen : take the Court Calendar, hear even what the world, who judges favourably of grandeur, narrates concerning their actions. The very

encomia which it confers are insults to reason. . . . Take the best aristocrat. He monopolizes a large house, gold dishes, glittering dresses : his very servants are decked in magnificence. How does *one* monopoly differ from another, —that of the mean Duke from that of the mean pacer between the pillars of the exchange? Having once established the position that a state of equality (if attainable), were preferable to any other, I think that the unavoidable inference must induce us to confess the irrationality of aristocracy. . . . Intellectual inequality could never be obviated until moral perfection be attained : then all distinctions would be levelled.

Adieu.

[Addressed outside, letter torn],  
Miss [HITCHENER],  
[Hurstpier]point,  
[Sus]sex.

## 77. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG

(York)

[LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS, LONDON,  
No date. ? August 14, 1811].

MY DEAR FRIEND,

My arguments have been *yours*. They have been urged by the force of the gratitude which this occasion excited. But I yet remain in London ; I remain embarrassed and melancholy. I am now dining at Grove's. Your letter has just been brought in ; I cannot forbear just writing this. *Your* noble and exalted friendship, the prosecution of your happiness, can alone engross my impassioned interest. I never was so fit for calm argument, as now. This, I fear, more resembles exerted action than inspired passion. I shall take another opportunity to-morrow of answering your long, interesting, and conclusive letter of yesterday.

Your Friend.

78. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG  
(York)

LONDON,

August 15, 1811.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

The late perplexing occurrence which called me to town, occupies my time, engrosses my thoughts. I shall tell you more of it when we meet, which I hope will be soon. It does not, however, so wholly occupy my thoughts, but that you and your interests still are predominant.

I have a rival in my sister's affections ; do not tremble, for it is not one whom I have occasion to dread, if I fear merely those who are likely to be successful. His chances of success are equal to my own. He has the opportunity of frequently seeing and conversing with Elizabeth ; yet his conversation is not such as is likely to produce any alteration in the resolve which she has taken, not to encourage his addresses. It is J[ohn] G[rove] ; she knows him well, and has known him long. Charles [H. Grove] informed me of it, and I left London yesterday, though now returned purposely to converse with my sister on the subject. J[ohn] G[rove] is certainly not a favoured lover, nor ever will be. I thought she appeared rather chagrined at the intelligence : she fears that she will lose an entertaining acquaintance, who sometimes enlivens her solitude by his conversion into the more serious character of a lover. I do not think she will, as his attachment is that of a cool, unimpassioned selector of a companion for life. I do not think the better of my cousin for this unexpected affair.

I could tell you something, and will ; you will then coincide with me. This, however, is an object of secondary importance. I know, from what I tell you, that others might be elevated by hope ; but I would say to them—Beware ; for although her rejection of the bare idea of G[rove] was full and unequivocal, I have no reason to suppose that it proceeded from any augmented leniency for another. I know how deep is the gulf of despair, and

I will not therefore increase any one's height ; but must still think how unfortunate it is for any wooer that he ever heard her very name ; he must long for the time when he will forget her, but which he now will say can never come !

I am now returned to London ; direct to me as usual, at Graham's. My father is here, wondering, possibly, at my London business. He will be more surprised soon, possibly !

My unfortunate friend, Harriet, is yet undecided ; not with respect to me, but herself. How much, my dear friend, have I to tell you ! In my leisure moments for thought, which since I wrote have been few, I have considered the important point on which you reprobated my hasty decision. The ties of love and honour are doubtless of sufficient strength to bind congenial souls—they are doubtless indissoluble, but by the brutish force of power ; they are delicate and satisfactory. Yet the arguments of impracticability, and what is even worse, the disproportionate sacrifice which the female is called upon to make—these arguments, which you have urged in a manner immediately irresistible, I cannot withstand. Not that I suppose it to be likely that *I* shall directly be called upon to evince my attachment to either theory. I am become a perfect convert to matrimony, not from temporizing, but from *your* arguments ; nor, much as I wish to emulate your virtues and listen myself to you, do I regret the prejudices of anti-matrimonialism from your example or assertion. No. The *one* argument, which you have urged so often with so much energy : the sacrifice made by the woman, so disproportioned to any which the man can give, —this alone may exculpate me, were it a fault, from uninquiring submission to your superior intellect.

Write to Graham's : you will hear from me again soon. All that I have told you here is in *confidence*. Adieu !

Yours eternally affectionate,

PERCY B. S.



## 79. TO ELIZABETH HITCHENER

(Hurstpierpoint).

[? LONDON],

August 19th, [1811].

MY DEAR MADAM,

Your letter yesterday disappointed me, not because it set me right in one of those trivial sacrifices to custom, which I am wont thro' their real unimportance to overlook; but because, in place of liberal ideas which have ever marked those characters of your mind which *I* have had an opportunity of observing, I noticed that you said: "Tho' *you* should have disregarded the *real* difference that exists between us." You remind me thus of a misfortune which I could never have obviated, not that the sturdiest aristocrat could suppose that a *real* difference subsisted between me, who am sprung from a race of rich men, and you whom talents and virtue have lifted from the obscurity of poverty. If there is any difference, surely the balance of real distinction would fall on your side.—You remind me of what I hate, despise and shudder at, what willingly I would not and the part from which I can emancipate myself in this detestable coil of primæval prejudice, that will I free myself from.—Have I not forsworn all this? am I not a worshipper of equality? it was the custom even with the Jews never to insult the Gods of other nations, why then do you put a sarcasm so galling upon the object of my adoration? Let us consider. . . . In a former letter you say that "Nature has decidedly distinguished degrees among a degenerate race." Admit for a moment that the composition of soul varies in every recipient, still *Nature* must have been blind to give a kingdom to a fool, a dukedom to a sensualist, an empire to a tyrant. If she *thus* distinguishes degrees, how does the wildest anarchy differ from Nature's law? or rather how are they not by this account synonymous?—Again: Soul may be proved to be, not that which changes its first principles in every new recipient, but an elementary essence, an essence of first

principles which bears the mark of casual [or] of intended impressions. For instance . . . the non-existence of innate ideas is proved by Locke ; he challenges any one to find an idea which *is* innate. This is conclusive. If no ideas are innate, then all ideas must take their origin subsequent to the transfusion of the soul. In consequence of this indisputable truth, intellect varies but in the impressions with which casuality or inattention has marked it. Where is now *Nature*, distinguishing degrees ? or rather do you not see that Art has assumed that office, even in the gifts of the mind ? I see the *impropriety* of dining with you—even of calling upon you. I shall not willingly, however, give up the friendship and correspondence of one whom however superior to me my arrogance calls an equal.

Adieu. Yours most sincerely,

PERCY S.

Excuse the haste in which I write this.

[Addressed outside],  
MISS HITCHENER,  
Hurstpierpoint,  
Sussex.

80. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG  
(York).

[YORK],

[August 25, 1811.]

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

Direct to the Edinburgh Post-Office—my own name. I passed to-night with the Mail. Harriet is with me. We are in a slight pecuniary distress. We shall have seventy-five pounds on Sunday [September 1], until when can you send £10 ? Divide it in two.<sup>1</sup>

Yours,

PERCY SHELLEY.

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<sup>1</sup> "When Bysshe finally came to town to elope with Miss W[estbrook]," says Charles H. Grove in the letter quoted in the

note on p. 130, "he came as usual, to Lincoln's Inn Fields, and I was his companion on his visits to her, and finally accompanied them early one morning,—I forget now the month, or the date, but it might have been September,—in a hackney-coach to the 'Green Dragon' in Gracechurch Street, where we remained all day, till the hour when the mail-coaches start, when they departed in the northern mail for York." Prof. Dowden points out that Shelley left London in the evening either of Saturday, August 24, or Sunday, August 25, and the place of departure, it would seem from Cary's "Travelling Companion," was probably not the "Green Dragon," as stated above, but the "Bull and Mouth," in Bull and Mouth Street. The sum of £75, which Shelley expected to receive on September 1, would evidently be the quarterly allowance of £50 from his father (which, of course, never reached him), and the rest of the amount from another source—perhaps a loan from Mr. Medwin, or Captain Pilfold.

Shelley at once took the preliminary steps for his marriage with Harriet, but no actual proof has as yet been established that such a marriage was legalized. A writer in *Chambers' Journal* for March 31, 1900, throws some important light on Shelley's so-called Edinburgh marriage. He says, "In regard to a public or regular Scotch marriage at that time two requisites were necessary: first, due proclamation of banns, and, secondly, celebration by a minister of religion. Shelley may have taken the first step in a regular marriage, but it is plain he did not go further. By Act 8, Assembly 1784, session clerks were prohibited from proclaiming parties until the leave of the minister had been obtained. Further, they could not proclaim banns until the parties had resided six weeks in the parish; otherwise they had to be proclaimed in the church of the parish where their ordinary residence was. If the session clerk did not know that they had been resident for six weeks in the parish, or that they were unmarried, and not within the forbidden degrees, they were required to bring a certificate signed by two householders and an elder." Such a certificate, evidently falsified, was discovered by Mr. James G. Ferguson, city session clerk at Edinburgh, among the city archives. The document, which is contained in a register of certificates for the proclamation of banns of marriage "of soldiers, carters, smiths, and labourers," is as follows: "1811. August. Mr. Percy Bysshe Shelley, Farmer, Sussex, and Miss Harriet [*sic*] Westbrook, St. Andrew's Parish, Daughter of Mr. John Westbrook, London. That the parties are free unmarried [*sic*], of legal age, not within the forbidden Degrees, and she has resided in Edinburgh upwards of Six Weeks is certified by Mr. Patrick Murray, Teacher, and Mr. Wm. Cumming, Hostler, both of Edinburgh, and the Bridegroom. Entd. (signed by) Percy Bysshe Shelley. Willm. Cumming. Patr. Murray." This certificate was afterwards entered in the books of the Register House, Edinburgh: "August 28, 1811. Percy Bysshe Shelley, farmer, Sussex, and Miss Harriet Westbrook, St. Andrew's Church Parish, daughter of Mr. John Westbrook, London." The writer quoted above, adds, "Banns had to be proclaimed on three successive Sundays. Under this condition, 16th September was the earliest date on which the



poet might have had the blessing of the Church. A case before the law-courts in 1825 shows that the law in this matter was loosely observed; and the Court of Session then declared to be clandestine a marriage following on a certificate of banns which had been issued by a parish clerk without any proclamation ever having been made, as was frequently the practice. This last may have been the mode of procedure in Shelley's case, and it seems unlikely that any marriage ceremony was ever performed. It is also more than probable that the certificate of proclamation which the clerk would issue to Shelley was the 'marriage lines' which Harriet sent to her father." Although such a marriage was a clandestine one, it might, by the Scottish law, be legally binding. As Prof. Dowden says, "The united ages of bride and bridegroom made thirty-five." The young couple took apartments on the ground floor of a newly-built house in George Street, where Hogg shortly afterwards joined them. They left Edinburgh, probably at the end of September or the beginning of October by post-chaise for York; Hogg says "the end of October," which cannot be correct, from the date of the next letter.

Although I have not succeeded in obtaining any of Shelley's letters from Edinburgh, it is evident that he must have written many from that city. Hogg tells us that on the day of his arrival at Edinburgh, he ascended Arthur's Seat with Harriet, while Bysshe went home to write letters; and that "Shelley went every morning himself, before breakfast, to the post-office for his letters, of which he received a prodigious number." He also states "At Edinburgh, as elsewhere, Bysshe received many letters. His uncle, Captain Pilfold, was the most useful of his correspondents at this time, for not only did he write cheerful, friendly, hearty letters, some of which I read, but he kindly supplied his peccant nephew with money. The cloud-compelling son of Sir Bysshe was fulminating and furious, darting his franked lightnings on all sides. His letter to my father is a good specimen of a mild thunderbolt: 'To John Hogg. Norton—Field Place, 8 September, 1811. Dear Sir,—I wrote to you in London by advice of a gentleman in the law, who I had advised with respecting my son having withdrawn himself from my protection, and set off for Scotland with a young female, though at that time it was conjectured he might make York in his way. This morning I have a letter from a gentleman [? Captain Pilfold] who had heard from him, that he was at Edinburgh, and that H[ogg] had joined him there. I think it right to give you the information, as from one parent to another, both of whom have experienced so much affliction and anxiety. God only knows what can be the end of all this disobedience. I am, Sir, Your very obedient servant, T. Shelley.'"—"Life of Shelley," Vol. I, pp. 439, 444, 465.

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*From a painting by George Romney in the possession of Sir John Shelley, Bt. By permission of the Editor of "The Connoisseur"*

SIR TIMOTHY SHELLEY



81. TO ELIZABETH HITCHENER  
(Hurstpierpoint)

YORK. MISS DANCER'S, CONEY STREET.<sup>1</sup>

[8 October, 1811.]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

May I still call you so, or have I forfeited by the equivocality of my conduct the esteem of the wise and virtuous? have I disgraced the professions of that virtue which, has been the idol of my love whose votaries have been the brothers and sisters of my soul? When last I saw you I was about to enter into the profession of physic.<sup>2</sup> I told you so, I represented my views as unembarrassed; myself at liberty to experiment upon morality, uninfluenced by the *possibility* of giving pain to others. You will know that my relational connexions were such as could have no hold but that of consanguinity: how weak this is may be referred to the bare feeling to explain. . . . I saw you. . . . in one short week how changed were all my prospects . . . how are we the slaves of circumstances—how bitterly I curse their bondage. Yet this was unavoidable. You will enquire how *I*, an *Atheist*, chose to subject myself to the ceremony of marriage,—how my conscience could consent to it . . . this is all I am now anxious of elucidating. Why I united myself thus to a female as it is not in itself immoral, can make no part in diminution of my rectitude . . . this, if misconceived, may. *I* am indifferent to reputation, all are not. Reputation and its consequent advantages are rights to which every individual may lay claim, unless he has justly forfeited them by an immoral action. . . . Political rights also, which justly appertain equally to each, ought only to be forfeited by immorality. Yet both of these must be dispensed with if two people live together without

<sup>1</sup> The Shelleys' lodgings at York were at a dismal and poverty-stricken house, the dingy dwelling of certain dingy old milliners.—Hogg's "Life of Shelley," Vol. I, pp. 470-1.

<sup>2</sup> Charles H. Grove says that when Shelley came to London in April, 1811, after his expulsion from Oxford, he [Grove] was "attending Mr. Abernethy's anatomical lectures. The thought of anatomy, especially after a few conversations with my brother

having undergone the ceremony of marriage. How unjust this is! Certainly it is not inconsistent with morality to evade these evils. How useless to attempt by singular examples to renovate the face of society, until reasoning has made so comprehensive a change as to emancipate the experimentalist from the resulting evils, and the prejudice with which his opinion (which ought to have weight, for the sake of virtue) would be heard by the immense majority!—These are my reasons. Will you write to me? Shall we proceed in our discussions of nature and morality? Nay more . . . will you be my friend, may I be yours? The shadow of worldly impropriety is effaced by *my* situation, our strictest intercourse would excite none of those disgusting remarks with which *females* of the present day think right to load the friendships of opposite sexes. Nothing would be transgressed by your even living with us. Could you not pay me a visit? My dear friend Hogg, that noble being, is with me, and will be always, but my wife will abstract from our intercourse the shadow of impropriety. . . . How happy should I be to see you. There is no need to tell you this, and my happiness is not so great that it becomes a friend to be sparing in that society which constitutes its only charm. I will close this letter. I have enough to say, but will wait for your answer until I write again.

Your great friend,

P. B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],  
Miss HITCHENER,  
Hurstpierpoint,  
Sussex.  
[Postmark], 10, 1811. York.

## 82. TO ELIZABETH HITCHENER

YORK,

[10] October, 1811.

I write to-day, because not to answer such a letter as yours instantly, eagerly—I will add, gratefully—were

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[John Grove], became quite delightful to Bysshe, and he attended a course with me, and sometimes went also to St. Bartholomew's Hospital."—Hogg's "Life of Shelley," Vol. II, p. 552.



impossible, but I shall be at Cuckfield on Friday night. My dearest friend (for I will call you so), *you* who understand my motives to action, which, I flatter myself, unisonize with your own, you, who can condemn the world's prejudices, whose views are mine, I will dare to say I *love* : nor do I risk the possibility of that degrading and contemptible interpretation of this sacred word, nor do I risk the supposition that the lump of organized matter which enshrines thy soul excites the love which that soul alone dare claim. . . . Henceforth will I be yours—yours with truth, sincerity and unreserve. Not a thought shall arise which shall not seek its responsion in your bosom, not a motive of action shall be unenwafted by your cooler reason : and, by so doing, do I not choose a criterion more infallible than my own consciousness of right and wrong (tho' this may not be required) ? for what conflict of a frank mind is more terrible than the balance between two opposing importances of morality ? This is surely the only wretchedness to which a mind who only acknowledges virtue its master can feel. I leave York to-night for Cuckfield, where I shall arrive on Friday.<sup>1</sup> That mistaken man, my father, has refused us money, and commanded that our names should never be mentioned. . . . Sophisticated by falsehood as society is I had thought that this blind resentment had long been banished to the regions of dullness, comedies and farces, or was used merely to augment the difficulties, and consequently the attachment of the hero and heroine of a modern novel. I have written frequently to this thoughtless man, and am now determined to visit him, in order to try the force of truth, tho' I must confess

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<sup>1</sup> Apparently October 11, which was a Friday. Hogg says that "the next morning" [after Shelley's arrival at York] "Bysshe announced that he must go to London that night by the mail, to see Whitton (his father's solicitor), and that he "departed as he resolved to do." During Shelley's absence, Harriet's sister, Eliza Westbrook, arrived. ("Life of Shelley," Vol. I, pp. 473, 475.) It was natural, too, that Shelley should seek the help of his uncle, Captain Pilfold, at Cuckfield, in his attempts to make terms with his father.

I consider it nearly as hyperbolical as "music rending the knotted oak." Some philosophers have ascribed indefiniteness to the powers of intellect; but I question whether it ever would make an ink-stand capable of free-agency. Is this too severe? but, you know, I, like the God of the Jews, set myself up as no respecter of persons, and relationship is considered by me as bearing that relation to reason which a band of straw does to fire. I love you more than any relation; I profess you are the sister of my soul, its dearest sister, and I think the component parts of that soul must undergo complete dissolution before its sympathies can perish.

Some Philosophers have taken a world of pains to persuade us that congeniality is but romance. . . certainly *reason* can never either account for, or prove the truth of, feeling. . . . I have considered it in every possible light; and reason tells me that death is the boundary of the life of man, yet I feel, I believe the direct contrary. . . . The senses are the only inlets of knowledge, and there is an inward sense that has persuaded me of this. How I digress, how does one reasoning lead to another, involving a chain of endless considerations! Certainly, everything is connected, both in the moral and physical world there is a train of events, and (tho' not likely) it is impossible to deny, but that the turn which my mind has taken originated from the conquest of England by William of Normandy. By the bye, I have something to talk to you of—Money. . . . I covet it.— "What you? you a miser, you desire gold, you a slave to the most contemptible of ambitions!" No, I am not; but I still desire money, and I desire it because I think I know the use of it. It commands labor, it gives leisure, and to give leisure to those who will employ it in the forwarding of truth is the noblest present an individual can make to the whole. I will open to you my views . . . on my coming to the estate which, worldly considered is mine, but which actually I have not more, perhaps not so great a right to, as you, justice demands that it should be

shared between my sisters? Does it, or does it not? Mankind are as much my brethren and sisters as they: *all* ought to share. This cannot be; it must be confined. But thou art a sister of *my soul*, *he* is its brother: surely these have a right. Consider this subject, write to me on it. Divest yourself of individuality: dare to place *self* at a distance which I know you can, spurn those bugbears, gratitude, obligation, and modesty . . . the world calls these "virtues," they are well enough for the world. It wants a chain, it hath forged one for itself, but with the sister of my soul I have no obligation, to her I feel no gratitude, I stand not on etiquette, alias insincerity. The ideas excited by these words are varying, frequently unjust, always *selfish*. Love in the sense in which we understand it, needs not these succedanea. Consider the questions which I have proposed to you. I know you are above that pretended confession of your own imbecility which the world has nicknamed modesty, and you must be conscious of your own high worth. To underrate your powers is an evil of greater magnitude than the contrary, the former benumbs, whilst the latter excites to action. My friend Hogg and myself consider our property as common, that the day will arrive when *we* shall do the same is the wish of my soul, whose consummation I most eagerly anticipate.

✓ My uncle is a most generous fellow, had he not assisted us, we should still [have] been chained to the filth and *commerce* of Edinburgh. Vile as aristocracy is, commerce—purse-proud ignorance and illiterateness—is more contemptible. . . . I still see Religion to be immoral. When I contemplate these gigantic piles of superstition—when I consider too the leisure for the exercise of mind, which the labour which erected them annihilated—I set them down as so many retardations of the period when truth becomes omnipotent. Every useless ornament, the pillars, the iron railings, the juttings of wainscot, and as Southey says, the cleaning of grates—are all exertions of bodily

labor which tho' trivial, separately considered, when united, destroy a vast proportion of this invaluable leisure. . . . How many things could we do without ! How unnecessary are *mahogany* tables, silver vases, myriads of viands and liquors, expensive printing, that, worst of all. Look even [around some] little habitation,—the dirtiest cottage, which [exhibits] myriads of instances where ornament is sacrificed to cleanliness or leisure. Whither do I wander ? Certainly I wish to prove, by my own proper prowess, that the chain which I spoke of is real. The letter at Field Place has been opened and read, exposed to all the remarks of impertinence, not that they understood it. Henceforth I shall have no secrets for [? from] you ; and indeed I have much then to tell you—wonderful changes ! Direct to me at the Captain's until you hear again, but I only stay two days in Sussex, but I shall see you.

Sister of my soul, adieu.

With, I hope, eternal love,

Your

PERCY SHELLEY.

### 83. TO ELIZABETH HITCHENER

CUCKFIELD,

[Saturday, 12 October, 1811?]

I do not know that I shall have time to see you my dear friend whilst in Sussex, on Monday or Tuesday I *must* return. The intervening periods will be employed in the hateful task of combating prejudice and mistake. Yet our souls can meet, for these become embodied on paper, all else is even emptier than the breath of fame. . . . I omitted mentioning something in my last : 'tis of your visiting us. You say that at some *remote period*, etc. What is this remote period ? when will it arrive ? The term is indefinite and friendship cannot be satisfied with this. I do not mean to-day, to-morrow, or this week, but



the time approaches when you need not attend the business of the school, *then* you have your own choice to make of the place of your intermediate residence. . . . If that choice were in favour of me. . . . I shall come to live in this county. My friend Hogg, Harriet, my new sister, . . . could but be added to these the sister of my soul, *that* I cannot hope : but still she may visit us.

I have long been convinced of the eventual omnipotence of mind over matter : adequacy of motive is sufficient to anything, and *my* golden age is when the present potency will become omnipotence : this will be the millennium of Christians, when " the lion shall lie down with the lamb," tho' neither will it be accomplished to complete a prophecy, or by the intervention of a *miracle*. This has been the favourite idea of all religions, the thesis on which the impassioned and benevolent have delighted to dwell. Will it not be the task of human reason, human powers,—whose progression in improvement has been so great since the remotest tradition, tracing general history to the point where now we stand ? The series is infinite—can never end. . . . Now you will laugh at what I am about to tell you. Whence think [you]<sup>1</sup> this reasoning has arisen ? Just [conceive] its possible origin ! Never [could] you have [conceived] that three days on the outside of a coach caused it. [Yet] so it is. I am now at Cuckfield ; I arrived this morning ; and, tho' three nights without sleep, I feel now neither sleepy nor fatigued. *This* is adequacy of motive. During my journey I had the proposed end in view of *accumulating money to myself* for the motives which I stated in my last letter. I know I have something more to tell you—I forget what. The Captain is talking. . . . I must settle my plan of attack for to-morrow.

Adieu, my dear friend.

Your  
PERCY S.

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<sup>1</sup> The letter is torn ; the words in square brackets were supplied by Mr. T. J. Wise.

I am happy to hear what I have just heard. You are to come to dine here, and bring Emma, on Monday 21st, in the coach.

[Addressed outside],  
Miss HITCHENER,  
Hurstpierpoint,  
Sussex.

84. TO THOMAS CHARLES MEDWIN

(Horsham)?

CUCKFIELD,

Oct.[ober] 21, 1811.

DEAR SIR,

I understand that to obviate future difficulties, I ought now to make marriage-settlements. I entrust this to your management, if you will be kind enough to take the matter in hand. In the course of three weeks or a month, I shall take the precaution of being re-married,<sup>1</sup> before which I believe these adjustments will be necessary. I wish the sum settled on my wife in case of my death to be £700 per annum. The maiden name is Harriett Westbrook, with two T's—Harriett.

Will you be so kind as to address me at Mr. Westbrook's, 23 Chapel Street, Grosvenor-square? We most probably go to London to-morrow. We shall see Whitton, when I shall neither forget your good advice, nor cease to be grateful for it.

With kind remembrances to your family,

Yours most gratefully,

PERCY B. SHELLEY.

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<sup>1</sup> Shelley did re-marry Harriet, but not until March 24, 1814. See p. 416.

85. TO ELIZABETH HITCHENER  
(Hurstpierpoint)

MR. STRICKLANDS, BLAKE ST., YORK.<sup>1</sup>

[26 October, 1811?]

It is no "generosity": it is justice—bare, simple justice. Oh to what a state must poor human nature have arrived when simply to do our duty merits 'praise. . . . Let us delight in the anticipation (though it may not be *our* lot to breathe that air of Paradise) that the time will arrive when all that now is called generosity will be simply barely duty. . . . But you *shall not* refuse it. Private feelings must *not* be gratified at the expense of public benefit by your refusal: deeply would the latter suffer. I know you speak from conviction, nor except from conviction should I allow you to act as far as concerns me. It is impossible that you *should* do otherwise. Yet I hope to produce that conviction. You cannot be *convinced*—*quite* convinced. It is impossible that any one should thoroughly know themselves, particularly in an instance like this where self-deceit is so likely to creep in from the contagious sophistications of society, and, assuming the garb of virtue, represent itself to you as its substance.—I know you to be superior to that mock modesty of self-depreciation . . . this therefore has no weight.—See yourself, then, as you are. I esteem you more than I esteem myself . . . am I not right therefore of giving you at *least equal* opportunities of conferring on mankind the benefits of that which has excited this esteem? You may *then* share your possessions with that friend whom I ardently long to know and to love, but who must receive the tribute of gratitude from you, tho' if she has made *you what you are*, what claims may not just retribution make upon me in her behalf?

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<sup>1</sup> When Shelley returned to York from his visit to Cuckfield he changed his lodgings.—Hogg's "Life of Shelley," Vol. II, p. 9.

I have thus said what I think, at least two years before I can accomplish the projects which I have to execute. "It is the mere prodigality of promise," would the slave of others' opinion exclaim, "never to be executed, two months will dissipate the sickly ravings . . . it demands two years of uniform opinion!" Let them thus rave, 'tis their element, but, whilst the sister of my soul, the friend of my heart, knows its unchangeableness, how futile are these *gnat-bites*. But it is necessary that the *world* should not know this: to preserve in some measure the good opinion of prejudice is necessary to its destruction. This must be the most secret of communications. Thine are most sacredly secret to me.—But the time you lose in thus acquiring money for the noblest of human purposes would be saved by your acceptance of my offer. There are two years, however, to argue this subject in. We have now begun; I am convinced that I shall conquer.

When may I see the woman<sup>1</sup> who *indeed* deserves my love if she was thy instructress? let not the period be very distant. I already reverence her as a Mother. How useful are such characters! how they propagate intellect, and add to the list of the virtuous and free! Every error conquered, every mind enlightened, is so much added to the progression of human perfectibility. Sure such as you then, ought to possess the amplest leisure for a task to the completion of which each of those excellencies which excite my love for you are [<sup>?</sup> is] so adapted. Believe that I do not flatter, suspect me not of rash judgment. My judgment of you has been unimpassioned; tho' *now* unimpassionateness is over, and I *could* not believe you other than the being I have hitherto considered as enshrined in the identity of *Elizabeth Hitchener*. I hesitate not a moment to write to you. Rare though it be in this existence communion with you can unite mental benefit with

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<sup>1</sup> Miss Hitchener's schoolmistress and friend to whom she had referred in one of her letters to Shelley.



*pure gratification.* I will explain however the circumstances which caused my marriage . . . these must certainly have caused much conjecture in your mind. Some time ago when my sister<sup>1</sup> was at Mrs. Fenning's school, she contracted an intimacy with Harriet.—At that period I attentively watched over my sister, designing, if possible, to add her to the list of the good, the disinterested, the free. I desired therefore to investigate Harriet's character ; for which purpose I called on her, requested to correspond with her, designing that her advancement should keep pace with, and possibly accelerate, that of my sister. Her ready and frank acceptance of my proposal pleased me, and, tho' with ideas the remotest to those which have led to this conclusion of our intimacy, [I] continued to correspond with her for some time. The frequency of her letters became greater during my stay in Wales, I answered them ; they became interesting. They contained complaints of the irrational conduct of her relations, and the misery of living where she could *love* no one. Suicide was with her a favourite theme, her total uselessness was urged in its defence.<sup>2</sup> This I admitted, supposing she could prove her inutility, [and that she] was powerless. Her letters became more and more [gloomy]. At length one assumed a tone of such despair as induced me to quit Wales precipitately.—I arrived in London. I was shocked at observing the alteration of her looks. Little did I divine its cause ; she had become violently attached to *me*, and feared that I should not return her attachment. Prejudice made the confession painful. It was impossible to avoid being much affected. I promised to unite my fate with hers. I staid in London several days, during which she

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<sup>1</sup> Mary Shelley. See note p. 39.

<sup>2</sup> Hogg remarks that Harriet was always dwelling on the subject of suicide. "Early in our acquaintance," he says, "the good Harriet asked me, 'What do you think of suicide?'" She would at times seem to have been almost obsessed with the idea of self-destruction.

recovered her spirits. I had promised at her bidding to come again to London. They endeavoured to compel her to return to a school where malice and pride embittered every hour; she wrote to me. I came to London. I proposed marriage, for the reasons which I have given you, and she complied.—Blame me if thou wilt, dearest friend, for *still* thou art dearest to me: yet pity even this error if thou blamest me. If Harriet be not, at sixteen, all that you are at a more advanced age, assist me to mould a really noble soul into all that can make its nobleness useful and lovely. Lovely it is now, or I am the weakest slave of error. Adieu to this subject until I hear again from you.—Write soon, in pity to my suspense.—We did not call on Whitton as we passed.—We find he means absolutely nothing: he talks of disrespect, duty, etc. I observed that you were much shocked at my mother's depravity.<sup>1</sup> I have heard some reasons (and as mere reasons they are satisfactory) that there is no such thing as moral depravity. But it does not prove the non-existence of a thing that it is not discoverable by reason; *feeling* here affords us sufficient proof. I pity those who have not this demonstration, tho' I can scarce believe that such exist. Those who *really feel* the being of a God, have the best right to believe it. They may, indeed, pity those who do not; they may pity me but *until* I feel it I must be content with the substitute, Reason.—Here is a letter!—well, answer some of it,—though I allow 'tis terribly long.

Southey has published something new—"The Bridal of

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<sup>1</sup> It is not clear what Shelley means by his mother's depravity. She must have disapproved of her son's rather dubious marriage, and having hitherto been his ally, she would most probably have resented its clandestine nature in strong terms. One cannot place much reliance on Medwin's story (told in his "Life of Shelley") of, on some occasion when Shelley was visiting Field Place, in the absence of his father on his Parliamentary duties, his mother attempted to obtain his signature to a document by a simulated display of affection, and that he, detecting the ruse, declined to sign the paper.

Ferrandez :"<sup>1</sup> have you seen it? Have you read "St. Leon" or "Caleb Williams"?<sup>2</sup>

Adieu, dear Friend. Believe me

Ever yours sincerely,

PERCY B. SHELLEY.

Have you heard anything of Captain P[ilfold's] proceedings at F[ield] P[lace]?<sup>3</sup>—I have more to say, but no more room, so adieu.

[Addressed outside]. Single sheet,

Miss HITCHENER.

Hurstpierpoint,

Sussex.

## 86. TO CHARLES, DUKE OF NORFOLK<sup>4</sup>

(London)

MR. STRICKLAND'S, Blake Street, YORK.

October 28, 1811.

MY LORD DUKE,

As I experienced from you such an undeserved instance of friendly interposition in the spring, as I am well aware how much my father is influenced by the mediation of a third person, and as I know none to whom I could apply with greater hopes of success than to yourself, I take the liberty of soliciting the interference of your Grace with my father in my behalf. You have probably heard of my marriage. I am sorry to say that it has exasperated

<sup>1</sup> Southey's "Garci Ferrandez" is to be found in his collected poems, among the Ballads and Metrical tales, where it bears the date of Bristol, 1801.

<sup>2</sup> Two novels by William Godwin, published respectively in 1799, and 1794.

<sup>3</sup> See Timothy Shelley's letter to John Hogg quoted in the note on p. 138.

<sup>4</sup> Prof. Dowden prints the following extract from an unpublished letter from Shelley to his cousin Henry Charles Grove, dated York, October 29, 1811. "I am much obliged to you for your advice respecting Monsieur le Duc. I have availed myself of it, and expect the most salutary effects."—"Life of Shelley," Vol. I, p. 201.

my father to a great degree, surely greater than is consistent with justice, for he has not only withheld the means of subsistence which his former conduct and my habits of life taught me to expect as reasonable and proper, but has even refused to render me any, the slightest assistance. He referred me on application to a Mr. Whitton, whose answers to my letters vaguely complained of the disrespectfulness of mine to my father. These letters were calculated to make his considerations of my proceedings less severe. My situation is consequently most unpleasant: under these circumstances I request your Grace to convince my father of the severity of his conduct, to persuade him that my offence is not of the heinous nature that he considers it, to induce him to allow me a sufficient income to live with tolerable comfort.

I am also particularly anxious to defend Mr. Medwin from any accusations of aiding and assisting me, which my father may bring against him. I am convinced that a statement of plain truth on this head will remove any prejudice against Mr. M. from the mind of your Grace. That he did lend me £52 when I left Field-place is most true. But it is equally true that he was ignorant of my intentions; that he was ignorant of the purposes to which I was about to apply the money; that he expressed his regret that he had unknowingly been instrumental in my schemes, and that he declined lending me an additional sum when he was aware of them.

I apologize for thus trespassing on your goodness, and conclude by expressing my hopes of your compliance with my request, of the consequent success, and of subscribing myself

Your Grace's

Very obliged hum[ble] ser[vant],

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF NORFOLK,  
St. James' Square, London,  
[Postmark], Oct. 30, 1811.



#### IV.—KESWICK

November 6, 1811—January 29, 1812

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SHELLEY's reason for leaving York—Hogg's treachery—Chestnut Cottage—Chemical experiments—Visit to the Duke of Norfolk—William Calvert—Shelley's "Werther" letter—Captain Pilfold—Robert Southey—James Montgomery—"Hubert Cauvin"—Mrs. Lovell—Correspondence with William Godwin—Preparations for the Irish Campaign—Shelley writes his "Address to the Irish People"—"The Devil's Walk"—Poems—Sir Bysshe.

#### 87. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG

(York)

[TOWNHEAD.] KESWICK, Wednesday night.

[? November 6, 1811.]

You were surprised at our sudden departure;<sup>1</sup> I have no time, however, *now*, either to account for it or enter into the investigation which we agreed upon. I have arrived at this place after some days of incessant travelling,

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<sup>1</sup> Shelley left York, according to Mr. D. F. MacCarthy ("Shelley's Early Life," p. 118), on Tuesday, October 29th. The date of this letter is probably November 6th, which was a Wednesday. Shelley, who stayed at Richmond on his way, may not have written to Hogg immediately on arriving at Keswick. The reason for his sudden departure, without taking leave of Hogg, is explained in the following letters to Miss Hitchener; Hogg implies that it was merely the result of caprice. He says he received eight letters from Shelley while he was at Keswick, none of which bore a date or postmark. We know that there was at least one more (No. 105), and from Shelley's allusions to his correspondence with Hogg at this time, in his letters to Miss Hitchener, it seems probable that Hogg suppressed entire letters, or at least passages of letters from those that he printed. Hogg altered many of the letters of Shelley to other correspondents that he included in his life of the poet, and there is every reason for believing that he printed inaccurately those that Shelley addressed to himself. Absolute reliance, therefore, cannot be placed on any of these letters to Hogg, and least of all can one accept unreservedly those written to him from Keswick.

which has left me no leisure to write to you at length. To-morrow you will hear more.

With real, true interest, I constantly think of you, believe me, my friend, so sincerely am I attached to you. I can never forget you.

Yours,

PERCY S.

Will you send my box per coach to Mr. D. Crosthwaite's,<sup>1</sup> Town Head, Keswick, Cumberland.

### 88. TO ELIZABETH HITCHENER

(Hurstpierpoint)

[TOWNHEAD, KESWICK,

? November 8, 1811.]

My friend will be surprised to hear of me from Keswick in Cumberland: more so will she be astonished at the occasion. It is a thing that makes my blood run cold to think of. I almost lose my confidence in the power of truth, its unalterableness. Human nature appears so depraved. Even those in whom we place unlimited confidence, between whom and yourself suspicion never came, appear depraved as the rest. High powers appear but to present opportunities for occasioning superior misery. Can it be thus always? You know how I have described *Hogg*, my enthusiasm in his defence, my love for him. You know I have considered him but little below perfection. I have spoken to you of him—have described him not with the exaggerations but with the truth of friendship; I have resolved because I am your friend to make you the depository of a secret . . . it is to me a most terrible one. *Hogg* is a mistaken man—vilely, dreadfully mistaken. But you shall hear; then judge of the extent of the evil which I deplore . . . That he whom my fond expectations had pictured the champion of virtue, the

<sup>1</sup> Where the Shelleys lodged during their first days at the Lakes,

enemy of prejudice, should himself become the meanest slave of the most contemptible of prejudices, is indeed dreadful. But listen. How fast you read this, I fancy I behold you. You know I came to Sussex<sup>1</sup> to settle my affairs, and left Harriet at York under the protection of Hogg. You know the implicit faith I had in him, the unalterableness of my attachment, the exalted thoughts I entertained of his excellence. Can you then conceive that he would have attempted to *seduce my wife*? that he should have chosen the very time for this attempt when I most confided in him, when least I doubted him?—Yet when did I *ever* doubt him?—yet my friend this is the case. And such an attempt . . . you may conceive his sophistry; you may conceive the energy of vice, for energy is inseparable from high powers; but never could you conceive, never having experienced it, that resistless and pathetic eloquence of his, never the illumination of that countenance, on which I have sometimes gazed till I fancied the world could be reformed by gazing too . . . you—you have never seen him, never heard him; or Harriet would have stood first in your regards as the heroic, or the unfeeling, who could have done other than as he directed. The *latter* she is not. Conjecture, conceive friend how I love you, how firm my reliance is on *your* principles, how impossible to be shaken is my faith in your nobleness. Then, then imagine what I have felt at losing by so terrible a reverse, a friend like you—lost too not only to me but to the world! Virtue has lost one of its defenders, vice has gained a proselyte. The thought makes me shudder. But must it be thus, cannot I prevent it? cannot I reason with him? Is he dead, cold, gone, annihilated? None, none of these! therefore *not* irretrievable—*not* fallen like Lucifer, never to rise again! Before I quitted York, I spoke to him. Our conversation was long . . . he was silent, pale, overwhelmed, the suddenness of the disclosure, and oh I hope

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<sup>1</sup> See p. 139.

its heinousness had affected him. I told him that I pardoned him freely, fully completely pardoned, that not the least anger against him possessed me. His vices and not himself were the objects of my horror and my hatred. I told him I yet ardently panted for his *real* welfare ; but that ill-success in crime and misery appeared to me an earnest of its opposite in benevolence. I engaged him to promise to write to me. You can conjecture that my letters to him will be neither infrequent nor short. I have little time to-day, but I pay this short tribute to friendship. Never dearest friend may you experience a disappointment so keen as mine. Write. I am at Mr. D. Crosthwaite's, Townhead, Keswick, Cumberland. The scenery is awfully grand : it even affects me in such a time as this. Adieu : write to me. I am in need of your sympathy. Harriet and her sister liked this part of the country ; and I was, at the moment of our sudden departure, indifferent to all places. A letter I suppose is waiting for me at York. H[ogg] will forward them Adieu, my almost only friend.

Yours eternally, sincerely,

PERCY B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],  
Miss HITCHENER,  
Hurstpierpoint,  
Sussex.  
[Postmark], Nov. 11, 1811.

### 89. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG

(York)

POST OFFICE, KESWICK, CUMBERLAND ;  
not Mr. D. CROSTHWAITE'S.  
[? November, 1811.]

I promised to write to you to-day, my dear friend, but again another day has elapsed in the occupation of preparing our residence, and night has come on, when the post leaves us.



We all greatly regret that "your own interests, your own *real* interests," should compel you to remain at present at York. But pray, write often; Your last letter I have read, as I would read your soul.

We remain at Keswick. We settle here, at least for some time. I will never go to the South again. Adieu.

Yours most affectionately, most unalterably,

PERCY SHELLEY.

90. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG

(York).

KESWICK, CUMBERLAND.

[? November, 1811.]

Your letters are arrived. You did right in anticipating that Richmond was only a resting place, and *Keswick* is our residence, to which place I wish you could follow us immediately.

I stand alone. I feel that I am nothing: a speck in an universe!

All this is true: yet have I not been wretched, and was my wretchedness less keen, because it was undeserved? *Was* it undeserved? What is desert? Are you not he whom I love, whom I deem capable of exciting the emulation, and attracting the admiration of thousands. I have ever esteemed you as a superior being, and take you for one who was to give laws to us poor beings, who grovel beneath. We shall meet again soon; but I must live some little time, I fear, by myself; and if my firmness is not sufficient to bear pain without hope of reward, I know that soon we meet again.

Your letters are kind and sincere. I had no time when I wrote last. If I thought we were to be long parted, I should be wretchedly miserable—half mad! I look on Harriet: she is before me; she is somewhat better. Has she convinced you that she is?

Oh! what a spot is this! Here nature has exhausted

the profusion of her loveliness! Will *you* come; will you share my fortunes, enter into my schemes, love me as I love you, be inseparable, as once I fondly hoped we were?

This is not all past, like a dream of the sick man, which leaves but bitterness—a fleeting vision. Oh! how I have loved you! I was even ashamed to tell you how!

And now to leave you for a long time! No; not for a *long* time! Night comes; Death comes! Cold, calm Death. Almost I would it were to-morrow. There is another life—are you not to be the first there? Assuredly, dearest, dearest friend. Reason with me still; I am like a child in weakness.

Your letters came directly after dinner;—how could any one read them unmoved? Calm, wise; are you then with me, and I forbear wishing that Death would yawn.—Adieu!

Cannot you follow us?—why not? But I will dare to be good—dare to be virtuous; and I will soon seize once more what I have for a while relinquished, never, never again to resign it.

#### 91. TO ELIZABETH HITCHENER

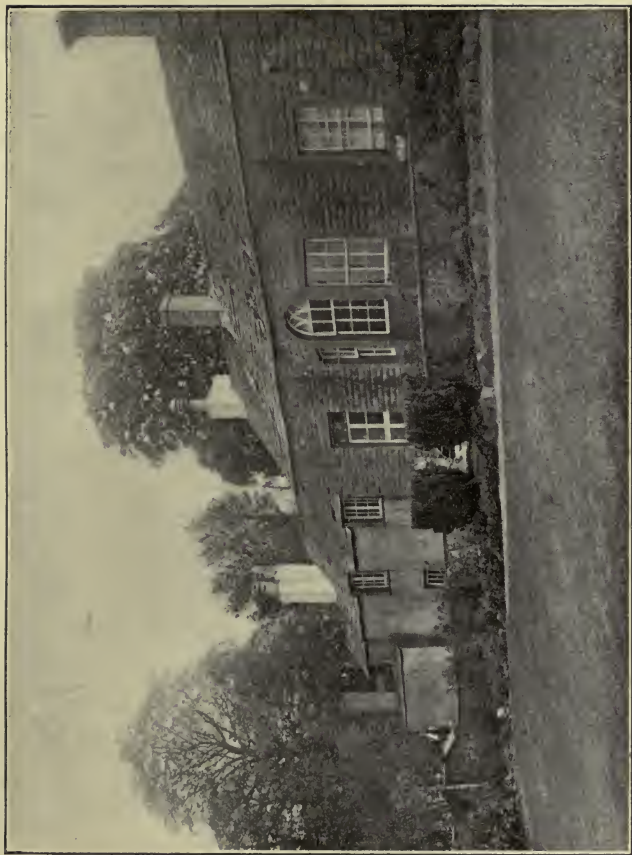
[CHESTNUT COTTAGE, KESWICK,<sup>1</sup>

November 12, 1811.]

Your letter of the 1st hath this moment reached me. I answer it according to our agreement, which shall be inviolable. Truly did you say that, at our arising in the morning, Nature assumes a different aspect. Who could

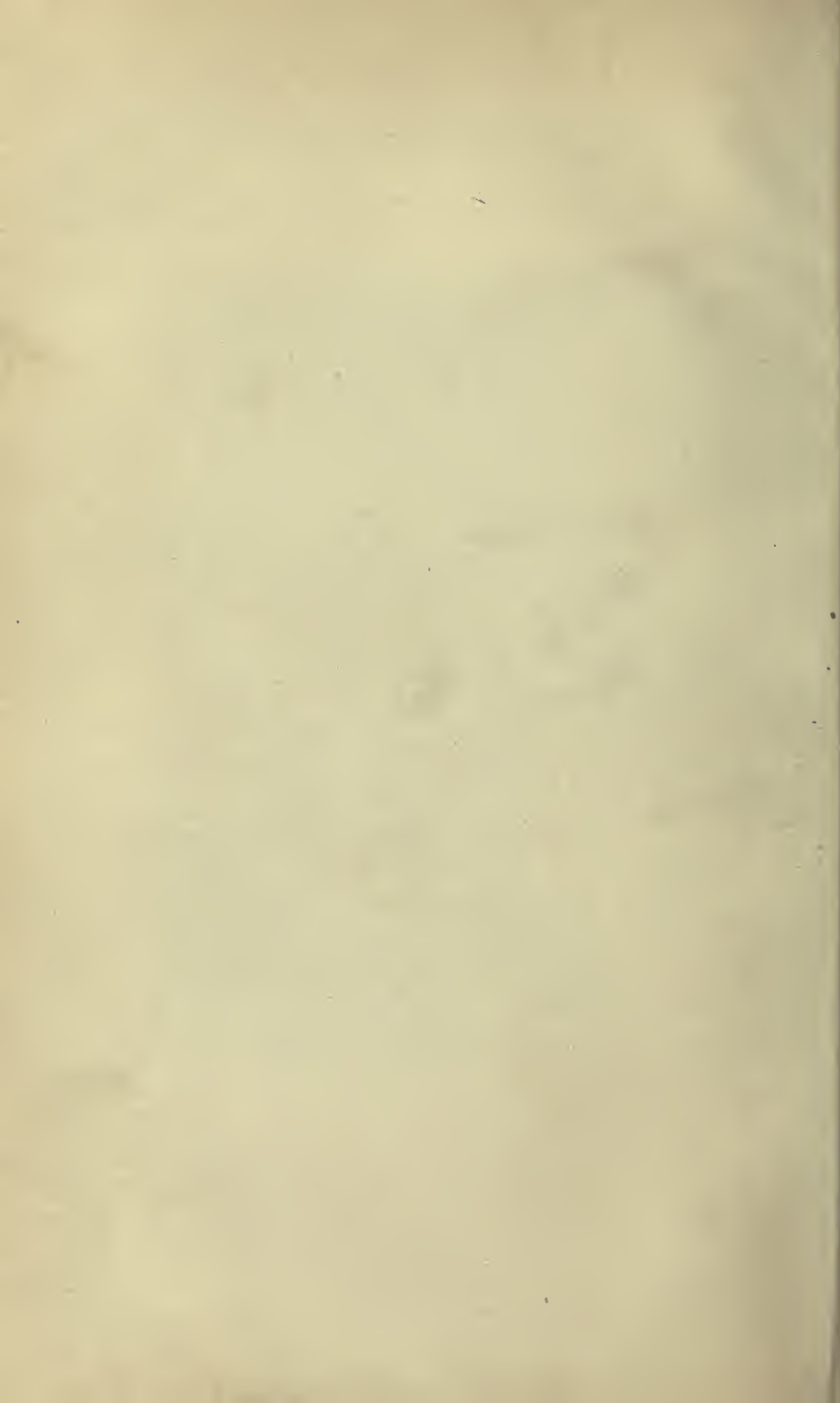
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<sup>1</sup> In connection with Chestnut Cottage, Professor Dowden gives the following delightful anecdote in his "Life of Shelley," Vol. I, p. 200: "The tenants of Chestnut Cottage may have appeared to some of the rural gentry little better than a pair of strayed children. 'Was the garden let with your part of the house?' asked a member of the Southey family. 'Oh, no,' replied Mrs. Shelley—a matron who was still almost a school-girl,—'The garden is not ours; but then you know, the people let us run about in it, whenever Percy and I are tired of sitting in the house.'"



*Photo by Walmsley Brothers, Ambleside*

CHESTNUT COTTAGE, KESWICK





have conjectured the circumstances of my last letter? Friend of my soul this is terrible, dismaying: it makes one's heart sink, it withers vital energy. Had a common man done so, 'twould have been but a common event, but a common mistake. Now! if for a moment the soul forgets (as at times it will) that it must enshrine the body for others, how beautiful does death appear, what a release from the crimes and miseries of mortality! To be condemned to feed on the garbage of grinding misery, that hungry hyæna mortal life!—But no I will not, I do not repine, dear being, I am thine again: thy happiness shall again predominate over this fleeting tribute of self-interest. Yet who would not feel now? O 'twere as reckless a task to endeavour to annihilate perception while sense existed, as to blunt the sixth sense to such impressions as these. Forgive me, dearest friend! I pour out my whole soul to you. I write by fleeting intervals, my pen runs away with my senses. The impassionateness of my sensations grows upon me. Your letter, too, has much affected me. Never, with my consent, shall that intercourse cease which has been the day-dawn of my existence, the sun which has shed warmth on the cold drear length of the anticipated prospect of life. Prejudice might demand this sacrifice, but she is an idol to whom *we* bow not. The world might demand it; its opinion might require, but the cloud which fleets over yon mountain were as important to our happiness, to our usefulness.—This must *never* be, never whilst this existence continues; and, when Time has enrolled us in the list of the departed, surely this one friendship will survive to bear our identity to heaven. What is love, or friendship? Is it something material—a *ball*, an *apple*, a *plaything* which must be taken from one to be given to another? Is it capable of no extension, no communication? Lord Kaimes defines love to be a particularization of the general passion, but this is the love of sensation, of sentiment—the absurdest of absurd vanities, it is the love of pleasure,

not the love of happiness. The one is a love which is self-centred, self-devoted, self-interested: it desires its *own* interest: it is the parent of jealousy. Its object is the plaything which it desires to monopolize. Selfishness, monopoly, is its very soul; and to communicate to others part of this love were to destroy its essence, to annihilate this chain of straw.—But Love, the Love which *we* worship, —Virtue, Heaven, disinterestedness—in a word. Friendship, which has as much to do with the senses as with yonder mountains, that which seeks the good of all, the good of its object first, not because that object is a minister to its pleasures, not merely because it even contributes to its happiness, but because it is really worthy, because it has powers, sensibilities, is capable of abstracting self, and loving virtue for virtue's own loveliness, desiring the happiness of others *not* from the obligation of fearing hell or desiring Heaven, but for pure simple unsophisticated Virtue.

You will soon hear again. Adieu, my dearest friend. Continue to believe that when I am insensible to your excellence, I shall cease to exist.

Yours most sincerely,  
inviolably, eternally,  
PERCY S.

I have filled my sheet before I was aware of it. I told Harriet of your scruples, for which there is not the slightest foundation. You have mistaken her character, if you consider her a slave to this meanest of mean jealousies. She desires to add something. I have scarcely room for her.

Southey lives at Keswick. I have been contemplating the outside of his house.<sup>1</sup> More of him hereafter.

Write: I need not tell you, write. I am in need of your letters.

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<sup>1</sup> Greta Hall, where Southey settled, in September, 1803, and spent the rest of his life.

Harriet desires her love to you and begs you will not entertain so unfavourable an opinion of her. She desires me to say that she longs to see you,—to welcome you to our habitation, wherever we are, as my best friend and sister.

Direct me at Chestnut Cottage, Mr. Dayer's [? Dare], Keswick, Cumberland.

92. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG  
(York)

KESWICK.

[? November, 1811.]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have just finished reading your long letter to Harriet. It is late, or the post is so ; therefore I may not say all I wish ; indeed, that is *not* possible : words cannot express half my reasonings, the thousandth part of my feelings. Can I not feel ; do we not sympathize ? Cannot I read your soul, as I have read your letter, which I believe I have generally considered to be a copy of the former. My letters have always been, as well as my conversations with you, transcripts of my thoughts

I did not concert my departure from Richmond, nor that from York. Why did I leave you ? I have never doubted you—you, the brother of my soul, the object of my vivid interest ; the theme of my impassioned panegyric. But, for the present, Adieu !

It is nine ; it is ten. Expect to hear to-morrow. I will then answer your letter.

Ever your Friend,

PERCY SHELLEY.

93. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG  
(York)

KESWICK, Thursday.

[? November 14, 1811.]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

We live now at Keswick. You do not come to us ; but pray, write. You may send my trunk. Open all my letters that come to York.

I have obeyed what you say in your letter of to-day ; I have not told you that I am miserable ; indeed I cannot be so miserable as I was when I wrote those letters. If you were to see me now, you would see me very calm ; as I am sure you are. Your long letter of advice has been my companion, my study, since I received it.

Adieu ! Be happy ! My dear friend, adieu !

Ever yours, with sincerity,

PERCY SHELLEY.

94. TO ELIZABETH HITCHENER  
(Hurstpierpoint)

KESWICK, CHESTNUT HILL, CUMBERLAND.

[November 14, 1811.]

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

Probably my letters have not left Keswick sufficiently long for your answer, I have more to tell you, however, which relates to this late terrible affair.

The day we left him he wrote several letters to me. the first evidently in the frenzy of his disappointment (for I had not told him the *time* of our departure). "*I will have Harriet's forgiveness, or blow my brains out at her feet.*" The others being written in moments of tranquillity, appeased immediate alarm on that score.—You are already surprised, shocked, I can conceive it. Oh, it is terrible ; this stroke has almost withered my being.



Were it not for that dear friend whose happiness I so much prize, which at some future period I may perhaps constitute ; did I not live for an end, an aim, sanctified, hallowed. . . I *might* have slept in peace. Yet no not quite that : I might have been a colonist of Bedlam. Stay : I promised to relate the circumstances. . . I will proceed historically. I had observed that Harriet's behaviour to my friend had been greatly altered, I saw she regarded him with prejudice and hatred. I saw it with great pain, and remarked it to her. Her dark hints of his unworthiness alarmed me, yet alarmed me vaguely ; for believe me, this alarm was untainted with the slightest suspicion of his disloyalty to virtue and friendship. Conceive my horror when on pressing the conversation, the secret of his unfaithfulness was divulged. . . I sought him, and we walked to the fields beyond York. I desired to know fully the account of this affair. I heard it *from him*, and I believe he was sincere. All I can recollect of that terrible day was that I pardoned him freely, fully pardoned him, that I would still be a friend to him, and hoped soon to convince him how lovely virtue was, that his crime not himself was the object of my detestation, that I value a human being not for what it has been, but for what it is, that I hoped the time would come when he would regard this horrible error with as much disgust as I did—He said little : he was pale, terror-struck, remorseful. This character is *not* his own ; it sits ill upon him, it will not long be his. His account was this—He came to Edinburgh, he saw me ; he saw Harriet. He loved her (I use the word because he used it ; you comprehend the different ideas it excites under different modes of application), he loved her. This passion, so far from meeting with resistance was encouraged,—purposely encouraged, from motives which then appeared to him not wrong.—On our arrival at York, he avowed it.—Harriet forbade other mention, yet forebore to tell me, hoping she might hear no more of it. On my departure from York to Sussex

(when you saw me), he urged the same suit, urged it with arguments of detestable sophistry. "There is no injury to him who knows it not: why is it wrong to permit my love, if it does not alienate affection?" These failed of success. At last, Harriet talked to him much of its immorality: and (though I fear her arguments were such as *could not* be logically superior to his) he confessed to her his conviction of having acted wrong, and, as some expiation, proposed instantly to inform *me* by letter of the whole. This Harriet refused to permit, fearing its effect upon my mind at such a distance: she could not know *when* I should return home. I returned the very next day.

This, as near as I recollect, was the substance of what cool consideration can extract from his account. The circumstances are true, Harriet's account coincides. I have since written to him frequently, and at great length. His letters are exculpatory: you shall see them.—Adieu at present to the subject. No, my dearest friend, I will never cease to write to you. I never can cease to think of you. Happiness, fleeting creation of circumstances, where art thou? I read your letter with delight; but this delight is even mixed with melancholy. And you! Tell me that *you* too are unhappy,—the cup of my misfortunes is then emptied to the dregs. Yet did you not say that *we* should stimulate each other to virtue? Shall I be the first to fail? No, this listless torpor of regret will never do, it never shall possess me. Behold me then reassuming myself, deserving your esteem,—you, my second self—

Harriet has laughed at your suppositions. She invites you to our habitation wherever we are: she does this sincerely, and bids me send her love to you. Eliza, her sister, is with us. She is I think a woman rather superior to the generality. She is prejudiced; but her prejudices I do not consider unvanquishable. Indeed I have already conquered some of them.

The scenery here is awfully beautiful. Our window

commands a view of two lakes, and the giant mountains which confine them. But the object most interesting to my feelings is Southey's habitation. He is now on a journey: when he returns, I shall call on him.

Adieu, dearest friend.

Ever yours, with true devotement and love,

PERCY SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],

Single [sheet],

Miss HITCHENER,

Hurstpierpoint,

Sussex.

[Postmark], November 18, 1811.

95. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG  
(York)

KESWICK.

[? November, 1811.]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Our letters are delayed terribly—two of yours together! The thing is, we are not *in*, but near, Keswick. . You will hear from me to-morrow.

I do not know that absence will *certainly* cure love; but this I know, that it fearfully augments the intensity of friendship.

I do not know where the passage exists of which you speak in the latter part of your letter. But this will not do; I must look for it.

Believe me yours, till you hear again.

I write in Keswick, just as the post is going out.

Your true, sincere,

P. B. SHELLEY.

Pray, take care of your friend.

96. TO ELIZABETH HITCHENER  
(Hurstpierpoint)

KESWICK, CUMBERLAND.

[November 20, 1811.]

Writing is slow, soulless, incommunicative. I long to talk with you ; my soul is bursting. Ideas, millions of ideas, are crowding into it : it pants for communion with you. Your letter, too, has affected me deeply. You must not *quite* despair of human nature. Our conceptions are scarcely vivid enough to picture the degree of crime, of degradation, which sullies human society—but what words are equal to express their inadequacy to picture its hidden virtue ? My friend, my dear only friend, never doubt virtue so long as yourself exists. Be yourself a living proof that human nature is a creation of its own, resolves its own determinations, that on the vividness of these depends the intensity of our characters. It was a terrible, a soul-appalling fall . . . but it was not, it could not be a fall never to rise again. It shall not, if I can retrieve it. He<sup>1</sup> desires to live with us again. His supplications (if his letters are, as mine have been, the language of his soul) have much of ardency, passionateness, and sincerity, in them. But this must not be. I have endeavoured to judge on this subject, if possible, with disinterestedness ; and I think I owe to Harriet's happiness and his reformation that this should *not* be. Keen as might have been my feelings, I think, if virtue compelled it, I could have lived with him now. You say he mistook the *love* of virtue for the practice. I think that you have endeavoured to separate cause and effect. No cause do I esteem so indissolubly annexed to its effect as the *real sincere* love of virtue to the disinterested practice of its dictates. . . You seem to have confounded love of Virtue with *talking*

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<sup>1</sup> That is, Hogg.



of the love of Virtue. Yet was not his conduct most nobly disinterested at Oxford? This appeared real love of Virtue. Then what a fall. . But not a remediless one. . . How are we to tell a tree? not even by its fruits. Are changes possible so quick, so sudden? I am immersed in a labyrinth of doubt. My friend I need your advice, your reason: my own seems almost withered. Will you come here in your Christmas Holydays? Harriet delights so much in this place that I do not think I *can* quit it. Will you come here? The poison-blast of calumny will not dare to infect you. Besides, what is the world? Eliza Westbrook is here, it is not likely, therefore, that anything would be said. *We* will never part in spirit: we are too firmly convinced of what we are ever to fear failure. Let the Christian talk of faith, but I am convinced that the wildest bigot who ever carried fury and fanaticism thro' a country never could so firmly believe his idol as I believe in you.—Be *you* but false, and I have no more to accomplish, my work is done, my usefulness is ended.

You talk of religion,—the influence human depravity gained over your mind towards acceding to it.—But, for this purpose, the religion of the Deist, or the worshipper of virtue would suffice, without involving the persecution, battles, bloodshed, which countenancing Christianity countenances.—I think, my friend, *we* are the devoutest professors of *true* religion I know,—if the perverted and prostituted name of “religion” is applicable to the idea of devotion of Virtue. “The just man made perfect” I doubt not of: but to this simple truth where is the necessity of annexing fifty contradictory dogmas, in order that men may destroy each other to know which is right? You see even now I can write against Christianity, “the enormous faith of many made for one.”

I write this hasty letter by return of post, because I do not wish to excite the anxiety you name: it is a terrible feeling. My friend, my dearest friend, adieu. One blessing has Fate given, to counterpoise all the evil she has

thrown into my balance ; and, when I cease to estimate this blessing—a true, dear friend—may I cease to live !

Your true, sincere, affectionate,

PERCY SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],

Miss HITCHENER,

Hurstpierpoint,

Brighton,

Sussex.

[Postmark], November 20, 1811.

### 97. TO ELIZABETH HITCHENER

(Hurstpierpoint)

KESWICK,

Nov. 23, 1811—SATURDAY.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

Your letter reached me one day too late, on account of a tempest happening, and delaying the mail. It hath at length reached me ; and dear, sacredly dear, to me is every line of it. I feel as if this occurrence had deprived me of the breath of life which now with such eagerness I inhale. Oh friendship like ours, its most soul-lulling comforts can, ought never to be called selfish—for, altho' we give each other pleasure, our love is not selfish. Reasoning is necessary to selfishness, and the delight I feel in bracing my mind with the energies of yours is involuntary. It is the remote result of reason ; but, in cases of this nature, it is necessary that a pleasure should immediately arise from the cool calculation of degree of benefit resulting to itself, before it can be *called selfishness*.—Your letter has soothed, tranquillized me : it seems as if every bitter disappointment had changed its bitter character.

I could have borne to die, to die eternally, with my once-loved friend. I could coolly have reasoned, to the conclusions of reason I could have unhesitatingly submitted ; earth seemed to be enough for our intercourse,

on earth its bounds appeared to be stated, as the event hath dreadfully proved. But with you—your friendship seems to have generated a passion to which fifty such fleeting inadequate existences as these appear to be but the drop in the bucket, too trivial for account. With you, I cannot submit to perish like the flower of the field. I cannot consent that the same shroud which shall moulder around these perishing frames shall enwrap the vital spirit which hath produced, sanctified (may I say, eternized ?) a friendship such as ours. Most high and noble feelings are referable to passion : but these—these are referable to reason (certainly *inspiration* hath nothing to do with the latter). I say, passion is referable to reason, but I mean the great aspiring passions of disinterested Friendship, Philanthropy. It is necessary that reason should disinterestedly determine, the passion of the virtuous will then energetically put its decrees in execution. Your fancy does not run away with your reason, but your too great dependence on *mine* does.—Preserve your individuality, reason for yourself, compare and discuss with me. I will do the same with you : for are you not my second self, the stronger shadow of that soul whose dictates I have been accustomed to obey ? I have taken a long *solitary* ramble to-day. These gigantic mountains piled on each other, these water-falls, these million-shaped clouds tinted by the varying colours of innumerable rainbows hanging between yourself and a lake as smooth and dark as a plain of polished jet—oh, these are sights attunable to the contemplation. I have been much struck by the grandeur of its imagery. Nature here sports in the awful waywardness of her solitude, the summits of the loftiest of these immense piles of rock seem but to elevate Skiddaw and Helvellyn. Imagination is resistlessly compelled to look back upon the myriad ages whose silent change placed them here ; to look back when perhaps this retirement of peace and mountain-simplicity was the pandemonium of druidical imposture, the scene of Roman pollution, the resting-place of the

savage denizon of these solitudes with the wolf.—Still, still further. Strain thy reverted fancy when no rocks, no lakes, no cloud-soaring mountains, were here; but a vast, populous and licentious city stood in the midst of an immense plain, myriads flocked towards it, London itself scarcely exceeds it in the variety, the extensiveness of consummateness of its corruption! Perhaps ere Man had lost reason, and lived an happy, happy race: no tyranny, No Priestcraft, No War.—Adieu to the dazzling picture! I have been thinking of you and of Human Nature, your letter has been the partner of my solitude, or rather I have not been alone for you have been with me. Ought *I* to grieve? *I*? and hath not Fate been more than kind to me? Did I expect her to lavish on me the inexhaustible stores of her munificence? Yet hath she not done so? What right have I to lament, to accuse her of barbarity? Hath she not given you to me? Oh how pitiful ought all her other boons, how contemptible ought all her injuries, *now* to be considered, and *you* to share my sorrows, Oh am I not doubly now a wretch to cherish them? I will tear them from my remembrance. I cannot be gay—gaiety is not my nature: I have seen too much ever to be so.—Yet I will be happy: and I claim it as a sacred right too that you should share my happiness. I will not be *very long* at this distance from you.

X I transcribe a little Poem I found this morning. It was written some time ago; but, as it appears to show what I then thought of eternal life, I send it.

#### TO MARY

##### WHO DIED IN THIS OPINION

Maiden quench the glare of sorrow  
 Struggling in thine haggard eye:  
 Firmness dare to borrow  
 From the wreck of destiny;  
 For the ray morn's bloom revealing  
 Can never boast so bright an hue  
 As that which mocks concealing,  
 And sheds its loveliest light on you.

x see p. 71.



Yet is the tie departed  
 Which bound thy lovely soul to bliss ?  
 Has it left thee broken-hearted  
 In a world so cold as this ?  
 Yet, though, fainting fair one,  
 Sorrow's self thy cup has given,  
 Dream thou'lt meet thy dear one,  
 Never more to part, in heaven.

Existence would I barter  
 For a dream so dear as thine,  
 And smile to die a martyr  
 On affection's bloodless shrine.  
 Nor *would* I change for *pleasure*  
 That withered hand and ashy cheek,  
 If my heart enshrined a treasure  
 Such as forces thine to break.

Pardon me for thus writing on. I preserve no connexion. I do not hesitate, I do not pause one moment, in writing to you. It seems to me as if some spirit guided my pen.

I feel with you. I *will* stifle all these idle regrets. I will sympathize with you. Write to me your sensations, your feelings, ah, I fear I have monopolised them ! Would that this terrible sensation had not forced me to call them thus into action. But to share grief is a sacred right of friendship—to share every thought, every idea. Remember, this is a *sacred right*. But why need I remind you of what neither of us is in any danger of forgetting ? Harriet will write to you : I have persuaded her. May she not share the sunshine of my life ? Oh ! lovely sympathy thou art indeed life's sweetest, only solace, and is not my friend the shrine of sympathy ? I hear nothing of my temporal affairs. The D[uke] of N[orfolk] hath written to me : I have answered his letter, he is polite enough. In truth, I do not covet any ducal intercourse or interference. I suppose this is inevitable and necessary. I have not seen Southey : he is not now at Keswick. Believe that on his return I will not be slow to pay homage to a *really* great man.

Oh I have much, 'much to say. Methinks words can

scarcely embody ideas: how wretchedly inadequate are letters!

Adieu dearest of friends. Never do I for one moment forget how eternally, sincerely, I am

Yours,  
PERCY S.

Your letters are six days in coming. Perhaps one of those hateful Sundays has been envious of my solace.

[Addressed outside],

A single sheet,

Miss HITCHENER,

Hurstpierpoint,

Brighton, Sussex.

[Postmark], Nov. 26, 1811.

#### 98. TO ELIZABETH HITCHENER

(Hurstpierpoint)

KESWICK, CUMBERLAND,

SUNDAY, NOV. 24, 1811.

I answer your letter my dearest friend not by return of Post, because the Keswick post comes in at seven and goes out at nine, and we are some distance. Your letters revive me, they resuscitate my slumbering hopes. The languid flame of life, which before burns feebly, glows at communication with that vivid spark of *friendship*. "Love" I do not think is so adequate a sign of the idea: its usual signification involves selfish monopoly, the sottish idiotism of frenzy-nourished fools, as once I was. But let that era be blotted from the memory of my shame, when purity, truth, reason, virtue, all sanctify a friendship which shall endure when the "love" of common souls shall sleep where the shroud moulders around their *soulless* bodies.—What a rhapsody! But with you I feel half inspired; and *then* feel half ashamed lest my inspiration like that of others, result from a little vanity.

I am discouraged. His<sup>1</sup> letters of late appear to me to betray *cunning*, deep cunning. But I may be deceived: oh! that I were in all that these five weeks had brought forth—His letters are long, but they never express any conviction or unison, they appear merely calculated to bring about what he calls “intimacy on the same happy terms as formerly.” This I have positively forbade the very thought of; I tell him that I am open to reason, I wish, ardently wish, that *he* would reason sincerely; but that, were I even convinced that his conduct resulted from *disinterested* love of Virtue, he could not live with us, as I should thereby barter Harriet’s happiness for his short-lived pleasure,—since my friend if it is true that *such* passions are unconquerable (which I do not believe), how much greater ascendancy will they gain when under the immediate influence of their original excitement—Love of what? Not *love* of my wife, for *love* seeks the happiness of its object, *even* when combined with the common-place infatuation of novels and gay life (oh no! I don’t know that). Love of *self*: aye, as genuine and complete as the most bigoted believer in original sin could desire to defile mankind,—these *fine susceptibilities*, to which casual deformity and advanced age are such wonderful cures and preventatives. But these have nothing to do with real love, with *friendship*. Suppose *your* frame were wasted by sickness, your brow covered with wrinkles, suppose age had bowed *your* form till it reached the ground, would *you* not be as lovely as now? Yet one of *these* beings would pass that intellect, that soul, that sensibility, with as much indifference as I would show to the night-star of a ball-room, the magnet of the apes, asses, geese, its inhabitants. So much for real [? false] and so much for true love. The one perishes with the body whence on earth it never dares to soar, the other lives with the soul which was the exclusive object of its homage. Oh if this

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<sup>1</sup> Hogg’s.

last be but true. You talk of a future state : " is not this imagination," you ask, " a proof of it ? " To me it appears so : to me everything proves it. But what we earnestly desire we are very much prejudiced in favor of. It seems to me that everything lives again.—What is the Soul ? Look at yonder flower. The blast of the North sweeps it from the earth ; it withers beneath the breath of the destroyer. Yet that flower hath a soul : for what is soul but that which makes an organized being to be what it is, —without which it would not be so ? On this hypothesis, must not *that* (the soul) without which a flower cannot be a flower *exist*, when the earthly flower hath perished ? Yet where does it exist, in what state of being ? have not flowers also some end which Nature destines their being to answer ? Doubtless, it ill becomes us to deny this because we cannot certainly discover it ; since so many analogies seem to favour the probability of this hypothesis. I will say, then, that all Nature is animated, that microscopic vision, as it hath discovered to us millions of animated beings whose pursuits and passions are as eagerly followed as our own ; so might it, if extended, find that Nature itself was but a mass of organized animation. *Perhaps* the animative intellect of all this is in a constant rotation of change, perhaps a future state is no other than a different mode of terrestrial existence to which we have fitted ourselves in this mode. Is there any probability in this supposition ? On this plan, *congenial* souls must meet ; because, having fitted themselves for nearly the same mode of being, they cannot fail to be *near* each other. Free-will must give energy to this infinite mass of being, and thereby constitute Virtue. If *our* change be in this mortal life, do not fear that we shall be among the groveling souls of heroes, aristocrats, and commercialists.—Adieu to this.

I have scribbled a great deal ; all my feeling, all my ideas as they arise, are thus yours. My dear friend believe that thou art the cheering beam which gilds this wintry



day of life, perhaps ere long to be the exhaustless sun which shall gild my millenniums of immortality. Adieu, my dearest friend.

Ever, ever yours,  
PERCY S.

[Addressed outside],  
single sheet,  
Miss HITCHENER,  
Hurstpierpoint,  
Sussex.

99. TO ELIZABETH HITCHENER  
(Hurstpierpoint)

KESWICK, CUMBERLAND.

[26 November, 1811.]

Your letters are like angels sent from heaven on missions of peace. They assure me that existence is not valueless, they point out the path which it is paradise to tread. And yet my dearest friend I am not satisfied that we should be so far asunder. Methinks letters are but imperfect pictures of the mind, they give the permanent and energetic outline, but a thousand minutiae of varied expressions are omitted in the portraiture. I am therefore sorry that you cannot come *now*. Cannot the sweet little nurslings of liberty<sup>1</sup> come? But I will not press you. Strange prejudices have these country people! I must relate one very singular one. The other night I was explaining to Harriet and Eliza the nature of the atmosphere, and, to illustrate my theory, I made some experiments on hydrogen gas, one of its constituent parts. This was in the garden, and the vivid flame was seen at some distance. A few days after, Mr. Dare entered our cottage, and said he had something to say to me. "Why, sir," said he, "I am not satisfied with you. I wish you to leave my house." "Why, sir?" "Because the country talks very

<sup>1</sup> The American children whom Miss Hitchener was educating (see p. 235).

strangely of your proceedings. Odd things have been seen at night near your dwelling. I am very ill satisfied with this. Sir, I don't like to talk of it : I wish you to provide yourself elsewhere."—I have, with much difficulty, quieted Mr. D.'s fears. He does not, however, much like us ; and I am by no means certain that he will permit us to remain.

Have *you* found a house ? I have your promise—next Midsummer will be my holidays. Heavens ! were I the charioteer of time, his burning wheels would rapidly attain the goal of my aspirations. You believe, firmly believe me. How invaluable dear ought *now* to be that credit, when an example so terrible has warned you to be sceptical. . That I believe in you cannot be wonderful, for the first words you spoke to me, the manner, are eternal earnestness of your taintlessness and sincerity. But wherefore do I talk thus, when we know, feel, each other ; when every sentiment is reciprocal ; when congeniality, so often laughed at, both have found proof strong as internal evidence can afford ? I do not love him now : bear witness for me, thou reciprocity of thought, that I do not ! It is, it is true—too true : what you say is conclusive. . . It tallies too well with what I have yet to tell you. Oh I have been fearfully deceived. . . It is not the degradation of imposition that I lament, but that a character moulded, as I imagined, in all the symmetry of Virtue, should exhibit the loathsome deformity of Vice—that a saviour should change to a destroyer.—But adieu to that now.

I shall not accuse my friend of endeavouring to *insinuate* the tenets of a religion in one sentence, the foundation, the corner-stone, of *which she* defies all the powers that exist to make her believe, in the next. Miss Weekes' marriage induces you to think marriage an evil. *I* think it an evil—an evil of immense and extensive magnitude, but I think a previous reformation in morals—and that a general and a great one—is requisite before it may be remedied. Man is the creature of circumstances, and these, casual circumstances, *custom* hath made unto him

a second nature. That which hath no more to do with virtue than the most indifferent actions of our lives hath been exalted into its criterion, and, from being considered so, hath become one of its criterions. Marriage is monopolizing, exclusive, jealous, the tie which binds it bears the same relation to "friendship in *which excess is lovely*" that the body doth to the soul. Everything which relates simply to this clay-formed dungeon is comparatively despicable, and, in a state of perfectible society, could not be made the subjects of either virtue or vice. The most delicious strains of music, viands the most titillating to the palate, wines of the most exquisite flavor, if it be innocent to derive delight from them (supposing such a case), it surely must be as *innocent* in whosoever company it were derived. A law to compel you to hear this music, in the company of such a particular person, appears to me parallel to that of Marriage. Were there even now such a law as this, were this exclusiveness reckoned the criterion of virtue, it certainly would not be worth the while of *rational people* to "offend their weak brothers," as St. Paul says, "by eating meats placed before the idols." It ill would become them to risk the peace of others; however prejudiced, by gaining to themselves what from their souls they hold in contempt. Am I right? It delights me to discuss and to be sceptical: thus we must arrive at truth—that introducer of Virtue and Usefulness.

Have you read Godwin's 2 "St. Leon"—1 his "Inquirer"—his 3 "Political Justice"—his 4 "Caleb Williams"?—1 is very good. 2 is good, very good. 3 is long, sceptical, good. 4 is good.—I put them in the order that I would advise you to read them. I understand you when you say we are free. Liberty is the very soul of friendship, and from the very soul of liberty art thou my friend; aye, and such a sense as this can never fade.

" Earthly those passions of the earth  
Which perish where they had their birth,  
But love is indestructible."

I almost wish that Southey had not made the Glendoveer a male : these detestable distinctions will surely be abolished in a future state of being.

“ The holy flame for ever burneth :  
From heaven it came, to heaven returneth.”

Might there not have been a prior state of existence ? might we not have been friends then ? The creation of soul at birth is a thing I do not like. Where we have no premisses, we can therefore draw no conclusions. *It may* be all vanity : but I cannot think so.

I may be in Sussex soon. I do not know where I shall be : but wherever I am, I shall be with you in spirit and in truth. *Do not think I am going to insinuate Christianity*, though I think it is as likely a thing as that you should. I annihilate God ; you destroy the Devil : and then we make a heaven entirely to our own mind. It must be owned that we are tolerably independent. As to your ghostly director, who told you to put out your sun of common sense in order that he might set up his rushlight, I can scarcely believe that he ever even imagined a “ call.”

When shall you change your abode ? Are you fixed at Hurst for some years ? I wish to know, as this will enable me to determine on some place of residence near to yours.

This country is heavenly : I will describe it when I have seen more of it. I wish to stay, too, to see Southey. You may imagine, then, that I was very humble to Mr. Dare : I should think he was tolerably afraid of the Devil. I have heard from Hogg since, often : his letters give me little hope, he still earnestly desires to live with us. You have brought me into a dilemma concerning his conduct, from which it is impossible to escape. I do not love him. I have examined his conduct, I hope with cool impartiality ; and I grieve to find the conclusion thus unfavourable. I hope you are indebted (as you call it) to the coolness of my judgment for my opinion of you. I have repeatedly told you what I think of you. I consider you one of those



beings who carry happiness, reform, liberty, wherever they go. To me you are as my better genius—the judge of my reasonings, the guide of my actions, the influencer of my usefulness. Great responsibility is the consequence of higher powers. I am, as you must be, a despiser of the mock-modesty of the world, which is accustomed to conceal more defects than excellencies. I know I am superior to the mob of mankind: but I am inferior to you in everything but the equality of friendship.

But my paper ends. Adieu. I bid adieu to-day to what is to me inexpressibly dear, your society.

Ever yours unalterably,

PERCY S.

Tuesday morning. On what day does this letter reach you?

Harriet desires me to send her love, and hopes you will answer her letter very soon.

[Addressed outside].

single sheet,

Miss HITCHENER,

Hurstpierpoint,

Brighton, Sussex.

# 100. TO THOMAS CHARLES MEDWIN

(Horsham)

KESWICK, CUMBERLAND,

Nov[ember] 26, 1811.

MY DEAR SIR,

We are now in this lovely spot, where for a time we have fixed our residence. The rent of our cottage, furnished, is £1 10s. 0d. per week. We do not intend to take up our abode here for a perpetuity, but should wish to have a house in Sussex. Perhaps you would look out for us. Let it be in some picturesque retired place—St. Leonard's Forest, for instance. Let it not be nearer to London than Horsham, nor near any *populous* manufacturing town. We do not covet either a propinquity to *barracks*. Is there

any possible method of raising money without exorbitant interest until my coming of age? I hear that you and my father have had a *rencontre*. I was surprised that he dared to attack you, but men always hate those whom they have injured; this hatred was, I suppose, a stimulant which supplied the want of courage. Whitton has written to me to state the impropriety of my letter to my mother and sister; this letter I have returned with a passing remark on the back of it. I find that affair on which those letters spoke is become the general gossip of the idle news-mongers of Horsham. They give me credit of having invented it. They do my invention much honour, but greatly discredit their own penetration.

My kind remembrances to all friends, believe me, dear sir,

Yours most truly,

P. B. SHELLEY.

We dine with the Duke of N[orfolk] at Graystock [Greystoke] this week.

[Addressed outside],

T. C. MEDWIN, Esq.,

Horsham,  
Sussex.

# 101. TO THOMAS CHARLES MEDWIN

(Horsham)

KESWICK, CUMBERLAND,

Nov[ember] 30, 1811.

MY DEAR SIR,

When I last saw you, you mentioned the possibility, alluding at the same time to the imprudence, of raising money even at my present age, at seven per cent. *We are now so poor as to be actually in danger of every day being deprived of the necessities of life.* In two years, you hinted that I could obtain money at legal interest. "My poverty, and not my will consents" (as Romeo's apothecary says), when I request you to tell me the readiest method of obtaining this. I could repay the principal and interest,

on my coming of age, with very little detriment to my ultimate expectations. In case you see obvious methods of effecting this, I would thank you to remit me a small sum for immediate expenses ; if not, on no account do so, as some degree of hazard must attend all my acts, under age, and I am resolved never again to expose you to suffer for my imprudence.

Mr. Westbrook *has sent me a small sum, with an intimation that we are to expect no more* ; this suffices for the immediate discharge of a few debts ; and it is nearly with our very last guinea that we visit the Duke of N[orfolk], at Graystock,<sup>1</sup> to-morrow. We return to Keswick on Wednesday. I have very few hopes from this visit. That reception into Abraham's bosom appeared to me to be the consequence of some infamous concessions, which are, I suppose, synonymous with duty.—Love to all.

My dear Sir,

Yours most truly,

PERCY B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],

T. C. MEDWIN, Esq.,

Horsham,

Sussex.

## 102. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG

(York)

CHESTNUT HILL, KESWICK.

[? December 1, 1811.]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

What you say of *my* superiority is perfectly erroneous. Consider a little, and you will discover this. The great apparent cause of it is my insensibility ; perhaps you are not prepared to boast of yours ; I am sure you are not.

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<sup>1</sup> Shelley expected to stay at Greystoke until Wednesday, December 4, but he seems to have extended his visit until December 8 or 9, probably the latter date as the 8th was a Sunday.—See MacCarthy's "Shelley's Early Life," p. 121.

If Harriet's state of health did not intervene between our meeting again immediately, to-morrow willingly would I return to York ; aye, willingly, and be happy thus to prove and to indulge my friendship.

" Absence extinguishes small passions, and kindles great ones." It is so in love, and so it is with friendship.

My friend, you say I ought always to set you an example of firmness. What ! I, the weakest, the most slavish of beings that crawl on the earth's face, to you ?

This is a sweet spot ! But, oh heavens, my soul is half sick at this terrible world, where nature seems to own no monster in her works, but man. They quarrel for straws ; they part on these quarrels ; and two lovers, whose existences seemed entwined, separate because—you can complete the portraiture yourself from my history.

Harriet has written to you ; what she has said, I know not. I have not been able to write for a day or two to you, owing to having been ill from the poison of laurel leaves—I have now.

Your letters of to-day have arrived ; I have read that to Harriet ; she showed it me. I know how much I owe you ; I feel it all. Believe me, your letter has delighted and affected me. I will write again to-morrow.

Your real, true, sincere Friend,

PERCY B. SHELLEY.

Will you send us Mr. S[trickland]'s bill ?<sup>1</sup>

### 103. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG

(York)

CHESTNUT COTTAGE, CUMBERLAND,

[? December 10, 1811.]

We returned to Keswick last night.<sup>2</sup> All your letters I have found here, which have arrived in my absence. To

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<sup>1</sup> For Shelley's lodgings at Blake Street, York.

<sup>2</sup> Probably Monday, December 9th.



think of returning again to York at present is *impossible*. I could not consent to the injury of Harriet's health—to the destruction of her nerves. You must know what you yourself are. Mock modesty can never have concealed from you the fascination which your society spreads. It were impossible to think of the friendship of such a being, and not to say that were worthier of attainment than fame, or pleasure, or the attachment of all other beings. To give up this, even for a few weeks, must be a sacrifice—how great an one my heart alone can testify. Yet this I now resign for a while. I resign it for Harriet's health ; possibly for my own (though *I* think not). I need only tranquillity.

If I were free, I were unceasingly yours, though I do not think you infallible. I think you capable of great things, and in such, as well as in the stores of such a mind as yours, can I conceive no pleasure equal to the participation.

I returned to Keswick yesterday. Your letters in the meantime were *not* forwarded to me.

Our stay here is so uncertain, that I know not one day where we may be the next.

Your real Friend,  
P. B. SHELLEY.

104. TO ELIZABETH HITCHENER  
(Hurstpierpoint)

[KESWICK,  
10 December, 1811 ?]

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

I have just found your letters. Three of them were here on our return from Greystoke. What will you think of not hearing from me so long ? Not that I have forgotten you. Your letters were indeed a most valuable treasure. I have just finished reading them. I shall answer them to-morrow.

We met several people at the Duke's. One in particular

struck me. He was an elderly man,<sup>1</sup> who seemed to know all my concerns; and the expression of his face, whenever I held the arguments, which I do *everywhere*, was such as I shall not readily forget. I shall have more to tell of him, for we have met him before in these mountains, and his particular look then struck Harriet.

Adieu, my dearest friend. I am compelled to break off in the middle of my letter by the conviction that this *may* be too late. You will hear from me to-morrow.

Yours, ever yours,

PERCY SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],  
Miss HITCHENER,  
Hurstpierpoint,  
Sussex.  
[Postmark], Dec. 12.

### 105. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG<sup>2</sup>

(York)

[KESWICK,

? December, 1811.]

You deceive yourself terribly, my friend; it is another source of proof to me that you should have written to [Harriet], as you have.

<sup>1</sup> Mr. William Calvert, of Greta Bank, Cumberland, with whom Shelley became on terms of intimacy before he left the Lake District, was the son of a former steward to the Duke of Norfolk. His brother Raisley was Wordsworth's generous benefactor.

<sup>2</sup> This letter was printed by Hogg in his "Life of Shelley" as the "Fragment of a novel" in imitation of the "Sorrows of Werther;" he adds that it is in the handwriting of Shelley, to whom he neglected to return it. There seems to be little doubt, however, as suggested by Mr. W. M. Rossetti and others, that it was the letter Shelley wrote when Hogg declared that he would blow out his brains unless he obtained Harriet's forgiveness. In Hogg's copy Charlotte's name appears throughout, for which I have now substituted Harriet's. The date of the letter is unknown, but it would seem to have been written before Shelley's letter to Miss Hitchener of December 15.

It convinces me at the same time of your real sincerity, great, self-deceptive, continued vehemence of passion, which borrows respect, deference from distance. It convinces me more forcibly than ever how unfit it is that you should live near us ; it convinces me that I, by permitting it, should act a subservient part in the promotion of yours and [Harriet's] misery. I am more and more convinced, that from a connection such as this, even intellectual, nothing but misery can arise : your passions impose upon your reason, if this is not evident to your apprehension. I either actually do, or merely affect to put self out of the question ; this we will not discuss ; if similar effects follow, the consideration of causes must be useless labour. You say you fear that you have lost my good opinion. " Good opinion " is very comprehensive, certainly. I no longer estimate your powers of resisting passion so highly as once I did. Certainly, I no longer consider your reason as superior to the sophistry of feeling, as once it was. How can I ? to what have you yielded ? How terrible, how complete has been the perversion of that reason I once almost fancied omnipotent ! I admit the distinction which you make between mistake and crime. I heartily acquit you of the latter. Yet how great has been your mistake ; even now does it continue. You never could think it *virtue* to act as you desired. You might, indeed, have been so far imposed upon by feeling as to imagine that virtue did not forbid it. I said I thought you were insincere—true. I do not wonder that you shudder at the accusation. It appears to me perfectly natural that you should at the same time be disguising, veiling, palliating ; you should think yourself the pattern of disinterestedness, which once you were, which once I hope again to behold you. I said you were insincere. I said so because I thought so. I still think so ; but you are imposed upon by feeling the contamination of falsehood is far, far from you. One expression in your long letter, your last letter, convinces me that you are still enthralled by feeling. It is merely an instance.

"I must, I will convince you," etc. "I must,—or, the alternative is terrible but decided. You shall believe," etc., "or, when *too late*, you shall feel." This gives me pain. This proves to me that, so far from being now under the guidance of reason, you wish to enforce my belief in you by an act, which itself is inadequate to the excitement of any belief, but that of *your* selfishness, or to *revenge* my want of it by this very act, which you know would embitter my existence. Else what means "*you shall feel when too late?*"

This, my friend, is not convincing. It might be enough (supposing I thought you remained in the state of mind which dictated that) to make me *say*, I believe in you, but not to *make* me believe in you. What will then make me again believe you to be what you were? Simply to resume that character which once gained the credence, the loss of which you complain of. Think, reason, methodize. Your present incapacity for all these; my conviction that your exposure to [Harriet's] attractions would augment that incapacity, are the limits of the change of my opinion regarding you. It appears to me that I am acting as your friend—your disinterested friend—by objecting to your living near us at present. Certainly, I am depriving myself of the very great pleasure of your society: this, however, is necessary; to this I submit.

You hint in your letter to [Harriet] your obligation to *me* for introducing you to her. Certainly, if I deserve any disservice at your hands, it is for unwittingly exposing you to the temptation and consequent misery of this very intercourse. Here, again, I see that feeling peeping out which would destroy our hopes again. Think not that I am otherwise than your friend; a friend to you, now more fervent, more devoted than ever, for misery endears to us those whom we love. You are, you shall be my bosom friend. You have been so but in one instance, and there you have deceived yourself. Still, let us continue what we have ever been. I will remain unchanged, so *shall* you *hereafter*. Let us forget this affair; let us erase from the



memory that ever it had being. Consider what havoc one year, the last year of our lives, has made in memory. How can you say, then, that good will not come ; that we shall not again be what we were ! Good and evil are in an ever-varying routine of change. If I am wretched this month, the arising of another may see me happy.

You will say, perhaps, that it is well for *me* to reason ; I am cold, phlegmatic, unfeeling, that I compromise for those sins which I love, by railing against those, which are matters of indifference. In the first part of this charge there may be some truth, I have more than once felt the force of this. Is constitutional temperament the criterion of morality ? Believe me, that this more than excuses to me the present irrationality, incongruity, and inconsistency of your words and actions ; I cannot avoid, however, seeing, that they are incongruous, nor seeing it, avoid earnestly desiring, that they may be otherwise.

Prove to me satisfactorily that virtue exists not, that it is a fabric as baseless as a schoolboy's vision—then take life, I will no more with it. I would not consent to live, to breathe, to vegetate, if this vegetation simply went on to imbibe for no other end, than its own proper nutriment the juices which surrounded it. Does the vegetable reason on the good it does to the air, when it absorbs azote ? does the panther destroy the antelope for the public good ? does the lion love the lioness for his sake or her own ? Prove, that *man* too is necessarily this ; my last act may be an act of this very selfishness, but it would be an act precluding the possibility of more of it, and I would leave the world to such, as could bear to inhabit its surface. Prove this, and I will say you have acted wisely. The argument concerning morality mentioned in your last letter was intended for this. But though I think you insincere (though without being conscious of it), I do not think that this is your opinion now ; yet, stay, what did I remark in your letter to [Harriet] ? It proves, at the same time, the insincerity, undisguisedness of your passion. Yet the

insincerity, which I have remarked as secretly betraying you.

You talk of female excellence, female perfection. Man is in your declamation a being infinitely inferior, whose proudest efforts at virtue are but mockeries of his impotence. [Harriet] is the personification of all this contrast to man, the impassionateness of the most ardent passion, that ever burned in human breast could never have dictated a compliment (I will not say, a piece of flattery) more excessive. She perceived it (for she has shown me your letter), and remarked with much indignation on the repetition of that continued flattery, which you had made your theme ever since she knew you. I wish you would investigate the sources of this passion, my dear friend; you would find it derived its principal source from sensation.

Let your "too, too great susceptibility of beauty," your very own sincere expression in your letter to [Harriet] suffice to convince you of the true state of your feelings. This caused your error primarily: nor can I wonder. I do not condemn, I pity; nor do I pity with contempt, but with sympathy, real sympathy. I hope I have shown you that I do not regard you as a *smooth-tongued traitor*; could I choose such for a friend; could I still love him with affection unabated, perhaps, increased? Reason, plain reason, would tell you this could not be. How far gone must you have been in sophistry, self-deception, to think sensation in this, in any instance laudable.

I am not happy. I tell you so. My last letter was written in the acuteness of feeling; but do you wish that I should be happy? Reassure yourself, and then be assured, that not a wish of my heart will remain ungratified, as respects you. I have but *one* other wish beside; to that, at present, I will not allude more. [Harriet] will write to you to-morrow. May I require, that, as one proof of self conquest, you will throw the letter into the fire, suppressing all thoughts of *adoration*, which I strongly suspect to arise from mere sensation, sentiment. But the

letter will arrive first : it will be pressed to the lips, folded to the heart, imagination will dwell upon the hand that wrote it ; how easy the transition to the wildest reveries of ungratified desire !

Oh ! how the sophistry of the passions has changed you ! The sport of a woman's whim, the plaything of her inconsistencies, the bauble with which she is angry, the footstool of her exaltation ! Assert yourself, be what you were. Love, adore ; it will exalt your nature, bid you, a man, be a God ! Combine it, if you will, with sensation, perhaps they are inseparable ; be it so. But do not love one, who *cannot* return it, who if she *could*, ought to stifle her desire to do so. Love is not a whirlwind, that it is unvanquishable !

106. TO ELIZABETH HITCHENER  
(Hurstpierpoint)

KESWICK, CUMBERLAND.

[December 11, 1811.]

You received a fleeting letter from me yesterday. An immediate acknowledgment of your letters I judged equal in value to the postage of a blank sheet of paper. Your letters, my dearest friend, are to me an exhaustless mine of pleasure. Fatigued with aristocratical insipidity, left alone scarce one moment by those senseless monopolizers of time that form the court of a Duke, who would be very well as a man, how delightful to commune with the soul which is undisguised—whose importance no arts are necessary or adequate to exalt ! I admire your father, but I do not think him capable of sympathizing with you. I you know consider mind to be the creature of education : that, in proportion to the characters thereon impressed by circumstances or intentions, so does it assume the appearances which vary with these varying events. Divest

every event of its improper tendency, and evil becomes annihilate. Thus then I am led to love a being, not because it stands in the physical relation of *blood* to me, but because I discern an intellectual relationship. It is because chance hath placed us in a situation most fit for rendering happiness to our relations, that if higher considerations intervene not, makes it our duty to devote ourselves to this object. This is your duty, and nobly do you fulfil it. Your father, I plainly see, has some mistakes. Cannot you reason him out of that rough exterior? It has the semblance of sincerity—in reality is it not deceit? Your attention to his happiness is at once so noble, so delicate, so desirous of accomplishing its design, that how could he fail if he knew it, to give you that esteem and respect, besides the love which he does? Methinks he is not your equal, not an exception to the general rule of my belief; that I have not found you equalled. . . Were he so, would he not discern your attentions? No: he must be *like* you, before I can ever institute a comparison between your characters. Of your mother I have not much opinion. She appears to me one of those every-day characters by whom the stock of prejudice is augmented rather than decreased. Obedience (were society as I could wish it) is a word which ought to be without meaning. If Virtue depended on duty, then would prudence be virtue, and imprudence Vice; and the only difference between the Marquis Wellesley and William Godwin would be that the latter had more cunningly devised the means of his own benefit. This cannot be. Prudence is only an auxiliary of virtue, by which it may become useful.—Virtue consists in the motive. Paley's "Moral Philosophy" begins: "Why am I *obliged* to keep my word? Because I desire Heaven, and hate Hell." *Obligation* and duty, therefore, are words of no value as the criterion of excellence.—So much for obedience—Parents and Children. Do you agree to my definition of Virtue—Disinterestedness?—Why do I enquire? I am as little inclined as you



are to quarrel with [——]:<sup>1</sup> I am as much obliged to him for the complex idea, tyranny. You *do* understand Locke, this is one of his complex ideas. The ideas of *power, evil, pain*, together with a very clear perception of the two latter which may almost define the idea *hatred*, together with other minor ideas, enter into its composition.

What you say about residing near is true. We cannot either get a house there immediately. At midsummer, *perhaps* before, we see you here: that is certain. Oh how you will delight in this scenery! These mountains are now capped with snow, the lake, as I see it hence, is glassy and calm. Snow-vapours, tinted by the loveliest colours of refraction, pass far below the summits of these giant rocks. The scene, even in a winter sunset, is inexpressibly lovely. The clouds assume shapes which seem peculiar to these regions. What will it be in summer? What when *you* are here? Oh give me a little cottage in *that* scene. Let all live in peaceful little houses—let temples and palaces rot with their perishing masters! Be society civilized, be you with us, grant eternal life to all; and I will ask not the paradise of religionists! I think the Christian heaven (with its Hell) would be to *us* no paradise: but such a scene as this!

How my pen runs away with me! We design, after your Visit (which Heaven knows, I wish would *never* end), to visit Ireland. We are very near Port-Patrick. If you could extend your time, could *you* not accompany us? But am I not building on a foundation more flimsy than air? Can I look back to the last year, and decide with certainty on anything but the eternity of my regard for *you*? Every day augments the strength for [of?] my friendship for you, dearest friend. Every day makes me feel more keenly that our being is eternal. Every day brings the conviction how futile, how inadequate, are all reasonings to demonstrate it. Yet are we—are these

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<sup>1</sup> This word is illegible in the MS.

souls which measure in their circumscribed domain the distance of yon orbs—are we but bubbles which arise from the filth of a stagnant pool, merely to be again re-absorbed into the mass of its corruption? I think not: I feel not. Can you *prove* it? Yet the eternity of man has *ever* been believed. It is not merely one of the dogmas of an inconsistent religion, though all religions have taken it for their foundation. The wild American, who never heard of Christ, or dreamed of original sin, whose “Great Spirit” was nothing but the Soul of Nature, could not reconcile his feelings to annihilation: he too has *his* Paradise. And in truth is not Iroquois’s “human life perfected” better than to “circle with harps the *golden* throne” of one who dooms half of his creatures to eternal destruction?—Thus much for the Soul. I have now my dear friend in contemplation a Poem.<sup>1</sup> I intend it to be by anticipation a picture of the manners, simplicity, and delights of a perfect state of society, tho’ still earthly. Will you assist me? I only thought of it last night. I design to accomplish it, and publish. After, I shall draw a picture of Heaven. I can do neither without some hints from you, the latter I think you ought to *make*. I told you of a strange man I met the other day: I am going to see him.<sup>2</sup> I shall also see Southey, Wordsworth, and Coleridge, there. I shall then give you a picture of them.<sup>3</sup> I owe you several letters,

<sup>1</sup> Was this Shelley’s first idea for the poem which ultimately developed into “Queen Mab”?

<sup>2</sup> Mr. William Calvert. See p. 184.

<sup>3</sup> Of the Lake poets, Shelley only met Southey. At the time of Shelley’s visit, Coleridge was delivering his lectures in London, and he did not return to Greta Hall until after Jan. 27th, 1812, the date of the last lecture. De Quincey, who did not meet Shelley either (although in later life he was much in sympathy with his work), is responsible for the assertion that the young poet did not encounter Wordsworth or John Wilson. Of Shelley, Coleridge said “I *might* have been of use to him, and Southey could not; for I should have sympathized with his poetics, metaphysical reveries, and the very word metaphysics is an abomination to Southey, and Shelley would have felt that I understood him.”

nor shall I be slack to pay you. I even now have much—oh, much—to say. But never can I express the abundance of pleasure which your three letters have given me. Surely my dearest friend you must have known by intuition all my thoughts to write me as you have done. Give my love to Anne<sup>1</sup>: what does she think of me? You delight me by what you tell me of her. *Every prejudice conquered, every error rooted out, every virtue given, is so much gained in the cause of reform.* I am never unmindful of this: I see that you are not. Tell Anne that if she would write to me, I would answer her letters. Now, my dearest friend, adieu. This paper is at an end, but what I have to say is not. I owe you several letters, and shall not fail in the payment.

What think you of my undertaking? Shall I not get into prison?<sup>2</sup> Harriet is sadly afraid that his Majesty will provide me with a lodging, in consideration of the zeal which I evince for the bettering of his subjects. I think I shall also make a selection of my younger poems for publication. You will give me credit for their morality. Well, adieu, my dearest friend—thou to whom every thought, every shade of thought, is owing, since last I wrote. Adieu.

Your sincerest,

PERCY S.

Harriet sends her love to you: the dear girl will write to you.

[Addressed outside],

Single.

Miss HITCHENER,  
Hurstpierpoint,  
Sussex.

[Postmark], Dec. 14, 1811.

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<sup>1</sup> Apparently one of Miss Hitchener's pupils. See another reference to her in letter No. 117, p. 233.

<sup>2</sup> Shelley's proposed visit to Ireland.

## 107. TO TIMOTHY SHELLEY

KESWICK, CUMBERLAND,

Dec[ember] 13, 1811.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have lately returned from Greystoke, where I had been invited by the Duke of Norfolk, that he might speak with me of the unhappy differences which some of my actions have occasioned.—The result of his advice was that I should write a letter to you, the tone of whose expression should be sorrow that I should have wounded the feelings of persons so nearly connected with me. Undoubtedly I should thus express the real sense of my mind, for when convinced of my error no one is more ready to own that conviction than myself, nor to repair any injuries which might have resulted from a line of conduct which I had pursued.—

On my expulsion from Oxford you were so good as to allow me £200 per ann[um]; you also added a promise of my being unrestrained in the exercise of the completest free agency. In consequence of this last I married a young lady whose personal character is unimpeachable. This action (admitting it to be done) in its very nature required dissimulation, much as I may regret that I had descended to employ it. My allowance was then withdrawn; I was left without money 400 miles from one being I knew, every day liable to be exposed to the severest exile of penury. Surely something is to be allowed for human feelings, when you reflect that the letters you then received were written in this state of helplessness and dereliction. And now let me say that a reconciliation with you is a thing which I very much desire; accept my apologies for the uneasiness which I have occasioned; believe that my wishes to repair any uneasiness is firm and sincere.—I regard these family differences as a very great evil, and I much lament that I should in any wise have been instrumental in exciting them,



I hope you will not consider what I am about to say an insulting want of respect or contempt ; but I think it my duty to say that however great advantages might result from such concessions, I can make no promise of concealing my opinions in political or religious matters. I should consider myself culpable to excite any expectation in your mind which I should be unable to fulfil. What I have said is actuated by the sincerest wish of being again upon those terms with you which existed some time since. I have not employed hypocrisy to heighten the regret which I feel for having occasioned uneasiness. I have not employed meanness to concede what I consider it my duty to withhold. Such methods as these would be unworthy of us both. I hope you will consider what I have said, and I remain, dear father, with sincerest wishes for our perfect right understanding,

Yours respectfully and affectionately,

P. B. SHELLEY.

#### 108. TO ELIZABETH HITCHENER

(Hurstpierpoint)

KESWICK [CUMBERLAND],

SUNDAY, December 15 [1811].

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

You will before now have my last letter, I have felt the distrustful recurrences of the post-office, which *you* felt when no answer to all your letters came. I have regretted that visit to Greystoke, because this delay must have given you uneasiness.

I have since heard from Captain P[ilford]. His letter contains the account of a meditated proposal, on the part of my father and grandfather, to make my income immediately larger than the former's, in case I will consent to entail the estate on my eldest son, and, in default of issue, on my brother. Silly dotards ! do they think I can be thus bribed and ground into an act of such contemptible

injustice and inutility, that I will forswear my principles in consideration of £2,000 a year, that the good-will I could thus purchase, or the ill-will I could thus overbear, would recompense me for the loss of self-esteem, of conscious rectitude? And with what face can they make to me a proposal so insultingly hateful. Dare *one* of them propose such a condition to my face—to the face of any virtuous man—and not sink into nothing at his disdain? That I should entail £120,000 of command over labor, of power to remit this, to employ it for beneficent purposes, on one whom I know not—who might, instead of being the benefactor of mankind, be its bane, or use this for the worst purposes, which the real delegates of my chance-given property might convert into a most useful instrument of benevolence!—No! this *you* will not suspect me of. What I have told you will serve to put in its genuine light the grandeur of aristocratical distinctions, and to show that contemptible vanity will gratify its *unnatural* passion at the expense of every just, humane, and philanthropic consideration,—

“ Tho’ to a radiant angel linked  
Will sate itself in a celestial bed,  
And prey on garbage.”

I have written this to you just as I have received the Captain’s letter. . . My indignant contempt has probably confused my language, and rendered my writing rather illegible. But it is my custom to communicate to you, my dearest friend,—to that brain of sympathetic sensibility—every idea as it comes, as I do to my own.

Hogg at length has declared himself to be one of those mad votaries of selfishness who are cool to destroy the peace of others, and revengeful when their schemes are foiled, even to idiotism. In answer to a letter in which I strongly insisted on the criminality of exposing himself to the inroads of a passion which he had proved himself unequal to control, and endangering Harriet’s happiness, he has talked of my “*consistency* in despising religion,

despising duelling, and despising sincere friendship"—with some hints as to duelling to induce me to meet him in that manner. I have answered his letter; in which I have said I shall not fight a duel with him, whatever he may say or do; that I have no right either to expose my own life, or take his—in addition to the wish which I have, from various motives, to prolong my existence. Nor do I think that his life is a fair exchange for mine; since I have acted up to my principles, and he has denied his, and acted inconsistently with any morality whatsoever. That if he would show how I had wronged him, I would repair it to the uttermost mite; but I would not fight a duel. Now, dearest partner of that friendship which once *he* shared, now I am at peace. He is incapable of being other but the every-day villain who parades St. James's Street, tho' even as a villain will he be eminent and imposing.—The chances are now much against *my* ever influencing him to adopt habits of benevolence and philanthropy. This passion of animal love which has seized him, this which the false refinements of society have exalted into an idol to which its misguided members burn incense, has intoxicated him, and rendered him incapable of being influenced by any but the consideration of self-love. . . How much worthier of a rational being is *friendship*, which tho' it wants none of the impassionateness which some have characterized as the inseparable of the other, yet retains judgment, which is not blind tho' it may chance to see something like perfection in its object, which retains its sensibility, but whose sensibility is celestial and intellectual, unallied to the grovelling, passions of the Earth.

Southey has changed. I shall see him soon, and I shall reproach him for his tergiversation.—He to whom Bigotry, Tyranny, Law was [*sic*] hateful, has become the votary of these idols in a form the most disgusting.—The Church of England, its Hell and all, has become the subject of his panegyric, the war in Spain, that prodigal waste of human

blood to aggrandize the fame of statesmen, is his delight, The constitution of England—with its Wellesley, its Paget, and its Prince—are inflated with the prostituted exertions of his Pen. I feel a sickening distrust when I see all that I had considered good, great, or imitable, fall around me into the gulf of error. But we will struggle on its brink to the last, and if compelled we fall—we shall have at all events the consolation of knowing that we *have* struggled with a nature that is bad, and that this nature [not ?] the imbecility of our proper cowardice, has involved us in the ignominy of defeat. Wordsworth (a *quondam* associate of Southey), yet retains the integrity of his independence; but his poverty is such that he is frequently obliged to beg for a shirt to his back.<sup>1</sup>

Well, dearest friend, adieu. Changes happen. . . . friends fall around us, what once *was* great sinks into the imbecility of human grandeur. Empires shall fade, kings shall be peasants, and peasants shall be kings: but never will *we* cease to regard each other, because we will never cease to deserve it.

My Harriet desires her love to you.

Yours most *imperishably*, and eternally,

P. B. SHELLEY.

I shall write again. Do these letters come as a single sheet?

[Addressed outside],  
single sheet. Keswick.

MISS HITCHENER,  
Hurstpierpoint, Sussex.

[Postmark], Dec. 18, 1811.

#### 109. TO TIMOTHY SHELLEY

KESWICK [CUMBERLAND],  
Dec[ember] 23, 1811.

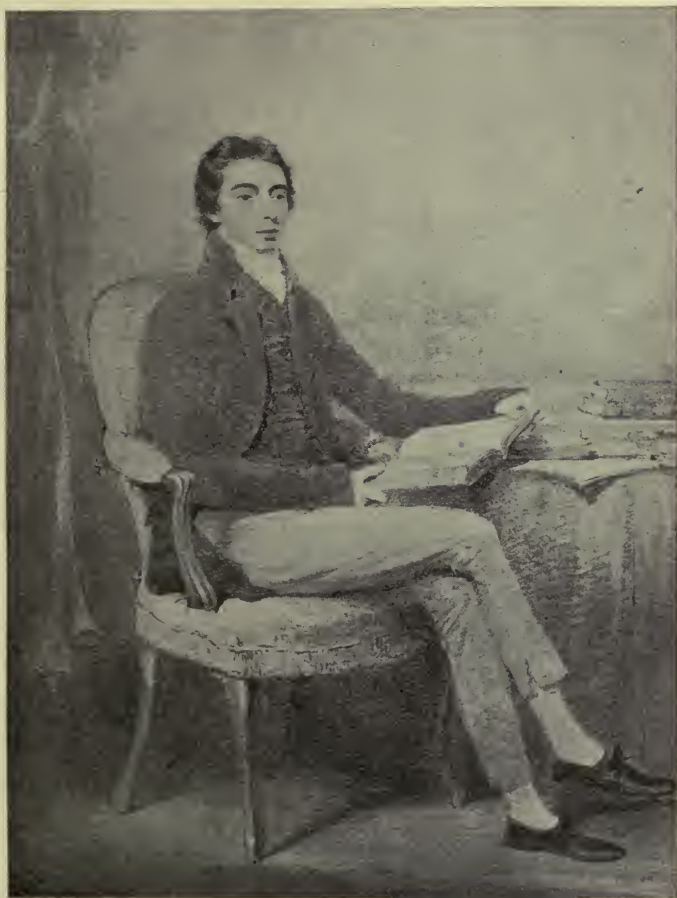
MY DEAR SIR,

Your letter which arrived last night gave me much

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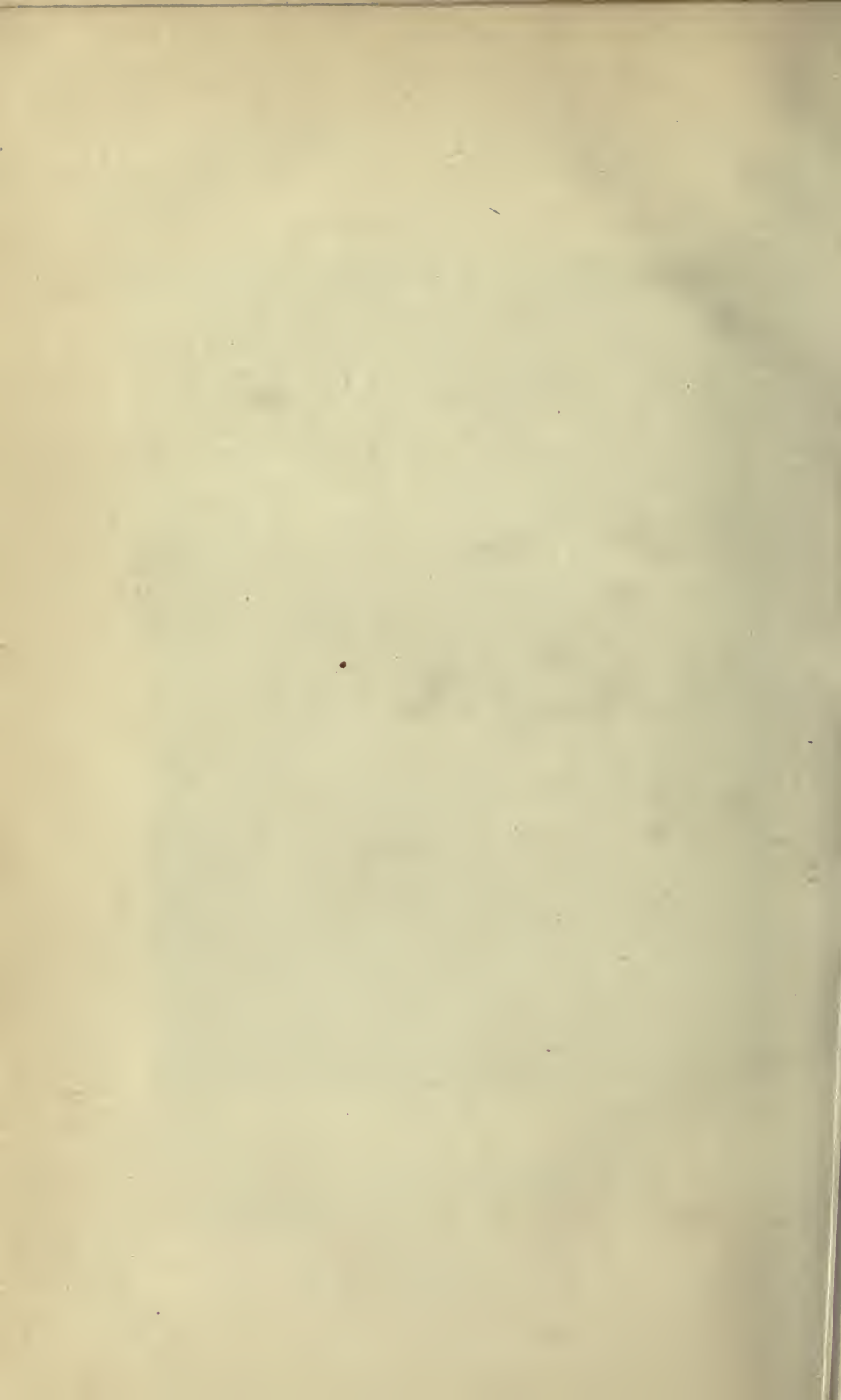
<sup>1</sup> Wordsworth's circumstances were at this time somewhat narrow, but he was never so poverty-stricken as Shelley represents.





*From a photo by Emery Walker, after a drawing in the National Portrait Gallery by Henry Edridge, A.R.A., dated 1804*

*Robert Southey*



pleasure ; I hasten to acknowledge it, and to express my satisfaction that you should no longer regard me in an unfavourable light.—

Mr. Westbrook at present allows for his daughter's subsistence £200 per ann[um], which prevents any situations occurring with similar unpleasantness as that at Edinburgh.

My principles still remain the same as those which caused my expulsion from Oxford. When questions which regard the subject are agitated in society I explain my opinions with coolness and moderation. You will not, I hope, object to my train of thinking. I could disguise it, but this would be falsehood and hypocrisy.

Believe that what I have said is dictated by the sincerest sentiments of respect.

I hope I shall sometimes have the pleasure of hearing from you, and that my mother and sisters are well ; Mr. Whitton opened a letter addressed to the former. I know not what may be the precise state of that affair which is there alluded to, but I cannot consider myself blameable for having interfered.

I beg my love to my mother and sisters, and remain, with sentiments of respect.

Your affectionate son,

P. B. SHELLEY.

#### 110. TO ELIZABETH HITCHENER

(Hurstpierpoint)

KESWICK [CUMBERLAND],

December 26, 1811.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

I have delayed writing for two days, that my letters might not succeed each other so closely as one day.—I have also been engaged in talking with Southey.<sup>1</sup> You

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<sup>1</sup> Shelley first met Southey at the house of Mr. William Calvert. Southey gives an interesting impression of Shelley in a letter to

may conjecture that a man must possess high and estimable qualities, if with the prejudices of such total difference from my sentiments I can regard him great and worthy.—In fact Southey is an advocate of liberty and equality. He looks forward to a state when all shall be perfected, and matter become subjected to the omnipotence of mind, but he is now an advocate for existing establishments. He says he designs his three statues in "Kehama" to be contemplated with republican feelings, but not in this age. . . . Southey hates the Irish, he speaks against Catholic Emancipation, and Parliamentary reform. In all these things we differ, and our differences were the subjects of a long conversation. Southey calls himself a Christian, but he does not believe that the Evangelists were inspired . . . he rejects the Trinity, and thinks that Jesus Christ stood precisely in the same relation to God as himself. Yet he calls himself a Christian: now if ever there were a definition of a Deist, I think it could never be clearer than this confession of faith.<sup>1</sup>—But Southey, though far from being a man of great reasoning powers, is a great Man. He has all that characterizes the poet,—great eloquence, tho' obstinacy in opinion, which arguments are the last thing that can shake. . . . He is a man of virtue, he will never belie what he thinks. . . . His professions are in strict compatibility with his practice.—More of him another time. With Calvert, the man whom I mentioned to you in that pigmy letter, we have now become acquainted. He knows everything that relates to my family and myself—my expulsion from Oxford, the opinions that caused it are no

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Grosvenor C. Bedford, dated January 4, 1812, from Keswick, and published in his "Correspondence," Vol. III, pp. 325, 326. Professor Dowden has printed the passage in his "Life of Shelley," (Vol. I, p. 211).

<sup>1</sup> Professor Dowden points out in his "Life of Shelley" (Vol. I, p. 213) that this description of Southey's religious opinions would seem to agree better with his earlier years than those of 1811-1812. His contributions to the *Edinburgh Annual Register* for 1812 show that he was a supporter of the Church of England.



secrets to him.—We first met Southey at his house.—He has been very kind to us. The rent of our cottage was two guineas and a half a week, with linen provided.<sup>1</sup> He has made the proprietor lower it to one guinea, and has lent us linen himself. We are likely therefore to continue where we are, as we have engaged, on these terms, for three months.—After that, we will augment his rent.

Believe [me] my most valued friend, that I am no less than yourself an admirer of sincerity and openness, mystery is hateful and foreign to all my habits: I wish to have no reserves. Were the world composed of such individuals as that which shares my soul, it should be the keeper of my conscience.—But I do not know whether, in the first place, the circumstance of Hogg's apostacy is such as would in any wise contribute to benefit by its publication; and, *not* knowing this, should I not be highly criminal to risk anything by its disclosure? Tho' I have much respect and love for my uncle and aunt,<sup>2</sup> and indeed can never be sufficiently thankful for their unlimited kindness, yet I know that no good end save explicitness is to be answered by this explanation; and my uncle's indignation would be so great that I have frequently pictured to myself the possibility of [its] outstepping the limits of justice. My aunt, too, would be voluble in resentment, and I am conscious that she suspected, long before its event, the occurrence of this terrible disappointment. To *you* I tell everything that passes in my soul, even the secret thoughts sacred alone to sympathy. But you are my *dearest* friend; and, so long as the present system of things continues (which I fear is not yet verging to its demolition), so long must some distinction be established between those for whom you have a great esteem, a high regard, and those who are to you what Eliza Hitchener is to me.—Since I

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<sup>1</sup> See Shelley's letter to T. C. Medwin of November 26, 1811, where he gives the rent of his cottage as thirty shillings a week; this may, however, have been a slip of the pen.

<sup>2</sup> Captain and Mrs. Pilfold.

have answered Hogg's letter, I have received another. It was not written until after the receipt of my answer. Its strain is humble and compliant: he talks of his quick passions, his high sense of honour. I have not answered it nor shall I.<sup>1</sup> He has too deeply plunged into Hypocrisy for *my* arguments to affect any change. I leave him to his fate. Would that I could have rescued him! It is an unavailing wish . . . the last one that I shall breathe over departed excellence. . . How I have loved him *you* can *feel*, but he is no longer the being whom perhaps 'twas the warmth of my imagination that pictured. . . I love no longer what is not that which I loved.—Do not praise me so much: my counsellor will overturn the fabric she is erecting.—You strengthen me in virtue, but weaken not the energy of your example by proposing your so high esteem as a reward for acting well. I know none of my principles who would do otherwise. This proposal will be (if made) a proof of the imbecility of aristocracy. I have been led into reasonings which make me *hate* more and more the existing establishment, of every kind. I gasp when I think of plate and balls and titles and Kings. I have beheld scenes of misery.—The manufacturers are reduced to starvation. My friends the military are gone to Nottingham. . . Curses light on them for their motives, if they destroy one of its famine-wasted inhabitants.—But if I were a friend to the destroyed, myself about to perish, I fancy that I could bless them for saving my friend the bitter mockery of a trial.—Southey thinks that a revolution is *inevitable*: this is one of his reasons for supporting things as they are. But let *us* not belie our principles. They may feed and may riot and may sin to the last moment.—The groans of the wretched may pass unheeded till the latest moment of this infamous revelry,—till the

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<sup>1</sup> Shelley appears to have refrained from corresponding with Hogg for nearly a year. The next letter to him, printed in his "Life of Shelley," is dated December 3, 1812.

storm burst upon them, and the oppressed take ruinous vengeance on the oppressors.—I do not proceed with my poem: the subject is not *now* to my mind. I am composing some essays which I design to publish in the summer. The minor Poems I mentioned you will see soon: they are about to be sent to the Printers.<sup>1</sup> I think it wrong to publish anything anonymously, and shall annex my name, and a preface in which I shall lay open my intentions, as the poems are not wholly useless.

“I sing, and Liberty may love the song.”

Can you assist my graver labours?

Harriet complains that I hurt my health, and fancies that I shall get into prison.—The dear girl sends her love to you: she is quite what is called “in love” with you. What do you advise me about Hogg and my uncle? If you think best, I will tell him. Do you be my mentor, my guide, my counsellor, the half of my soul. I demand it. I never heard of Parkinson.<sup>2</sup> I have not room to say anything of Xenophanes, I shall send for the “Organic Remains,” etc. You will like the “Political Justice”: for its politics you are prepared. (I hope you have got the *first* edition), the chapters on Truth and sincerity are impressively true, but I anticipate your opinions.

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<sup>1</sup> Shelley did not succeed in the endeavour to publish his minor poems. While at Dublin, he put them into the hands of R. and J. Stockdale, junr., of 62 Abbey Street, a firm of printers (unconnected with the London publisher of the same name), who refused, however, to proceed with the work until paid. It seems likely that a part of the volume was set up, as Shelley experienced some difficulty in recovering the manuscript. (See Harriet Shelley's letters to Miss Nugent, pp. 365, 380.) A manuscript volume of unpublished verse, undoubtedly that here referred to, belonging to this period of Shelley's life, in the possession of his grandson, Mr. Charles E. J. Esdaile, was made use of by Professor Dowden in his “Life of Shelley.”

<sup>2</sup> James Parkinson (d. 1824), a Hoxton surgeon and apothecary; besides some medical works he wrote popular books on health and education and “Organic Remains of a Former World,” 1804-11, three vols.

I have neglected ten thousand things—in my next.  
I *will* live beyond this life.

Yours, yours most imperishably,

PERCY S.

If they charge you a double sheet show this,<sup>1</sup> or open it before them, and they will retract.

[Addressed outside],  
Miss HITCHENER,  
Hurstpierpoint,  
Sussex.

[Postmark], Dec. 30, 1811.

### 111. TO ELIZABETH HITCHENER

(Hurstpierpoint)

KESWICK [CUMBERLAND],

Jan[uary] 2, 1812.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

Your immense sheet, and the voluminousness of your writing, and my pleasure, demand an equivalent. I can give it at length : but do not flatter me so much as to suppose that I can equal you in interest. Your style may not be so polished . . . sometimes I think it is *not* so legal as mine : but words are only signs of ideas, and their arrangement only valuable as it is adapted adequately to express them. Your eloquence comes from the soul : It has the impassionateness of nature. I sometimes doubt the source of mine, and suspect the genuineness of my sincerity. . . But I do not think I have any reason : no, I am firm, secure, unchangeable. . . Pardon this scepticism ; but I will incorporate, for the inspection of my second conscience, each shadow, however fleeting, each idea which worth or chance imprints on my recollection.—You have loved God, but not the God of Christianity. . . A God of pardons and revenge, a God whose will could change the order of the universe, seems never to have been the object

<sup>1</sup> Marked outside : " This is *only* a large single sheet."



of your affections. . . I have lately had some conversation with Southey which has elicited my true opinions of God. He says I ought not to call myself an atheist, since in reality I believe that the universe is God. I tell him I believe that God is another signification for the Universe. I then explain:—I think reason and analogy seem to countenance the opinion that life is infinite; that, as the soul which now animates this frame was once the vivifying principle of the *infinitely* lowest link in the Chain of existence, so is it ultimately destined to attain the highest . . . that everything is animation (as explained in my last letter); and in consequence being infinite we can never arrive at its termination. How, on this hypothesis, are we to arrive at a First Cause?—Southey admits and believes this.—Can he be a Christian? Can God be Three? Southey agrees in my idea of Deity, the mass of infinite intelligence. . . I, you, and he, are constituent parts of this immeasurable whole. What is now to be thought of Jesus Christ's divinity? To me it appears clear as day that it is the falsehood of human-kind.

You seem much to doubt Christianity. I do not: I cannot conceive in my mind even the possibility of its genuineness. . . I am far from thinking you weak and imbecile. . . you must know this. I look up to you as a mighty mind. . . I anticipate the era of reform with the more eagerness as I picture to myself *you* the barrier between violence and renovation.—Assert your true character, and believe one who loves you for what you are to be sincere. Knowing you to be thus great, I should grieve that you countenanced imposture. . . Love God, if thou wilt, I do not think you ever feared Him, but recollect *what* God is.

If what I have urged against Christianity is insufficient, read its very books, that a nearer inspection may contribute to the rectifying any false judgment. Physical considerations must not be disregarded, when physical improbabilities are asserted by the witnesses of a contested

question. Bearing in mind that disinterestedness is the essence of virtuous motive, any dogmas militating with this principle are to be rejected. Considering that belief is not a voluntary operation of the mind, any system which makes it a subject of reward or punishment cannot be supposed to emanate from one who has a master-knowledge of the human mind. All investigations of the era of the world's existence are incongruous with that of Moses. Whether it is probable that Moses or Sir Isaac Newton, knew astronomy best? Besides, Moses writes the history of his own death; which is almost as extraordinary a thing to do as to describe the creation of the world. Thus much for Christianity . . . this only relates to the truth of it . . . do not forget the weightier consideration of its direct effects. Southey is no believer in original sin: he thinks that which appears to be a taint of our nature is in effect the result of unnatural political institutions: there we agree. He thinks the prejudices of education, and sinister influences of political institutions, adequate to account for all the specimens of vice which have fallen within his observation. You talk of Montgomery. We all sympathise with him, and often think and converse of him. I am going to write to him to-day. His story is a terrible one . . . it is briefly this:—His father and mother were Moravian missionaries. They left their country to convert the Indians: they were young, enthusiastic, and excellent. The Indians savagely murdered them. Montgomery was then quite a child . . . but the impression of this event never wore away. When he grew up, he became a disbeliever of Christianity, having very much such principles as a virtuous enquirer of truth. In the meantime he loved an apparently amiable female. . . He was about to marry her. Having some affairs in the West Indies, he went to settle them before his marriage. On his return to Sheffield, he actually met the marriage-procession of this woman, who had in the meantime chosen another love. He became melancholy-mad: the

horrible events of his life preyed on his mind. He was shocked at having forsaken a faith for which a father and mother whom he loved had suffered martyrdom. The contest between his reason and his faith was destroying. He is now a Methodist. Will not this tale account for the melancholy and religious cast of his poetry?—This is what Southey told me, word for word.<sup>1</sup>

#### POET'S EPITAPH<sup>2</sup>

Art thou a Statesman, in the van  
Of public business born and bred?  
First learn to love one living man;  
Then mayest thou think upon the dead.

Art thou a lawyer? Come not nigh:  
Go, carry to some other place  
The hardness of thy coward eye,  
The falsehood of thy sallow face.

Art thou a man of rosy cheer,  
A purple man right plump to-see?  
Approach: but, Doctor, not too near!  
This grave no cushion is for thee.

Physician art thou—one all eyes—  
Philosopher—a fingering slave—  
One who would peep and botanize  
Upon his mother's grave?

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<sup>1</sup> James Montgomery (1771-1854), the Sheffield poet, was born in Ireland, the son of a Moravian missionary. He was put to school in Yorkshire, and in 1783 his parents went to Barbadoes, where they both died. Beginning life as a grocer's apprentice at Mirfield, Montgomery obtained employment in 1792 at a Sheffield newspaper office, and four years later, he became editor of the Sheffield *Iris*, a weekly journal in which he advocated political and religious liberty, and which he continued to conduct until 1825. He was twice prosecuted by the Government and sent to jail, where he wrote his "Prison Amusements," 1797. "The Wanderer of Switzerland" appeared in 1806, "The West Indies" in 1809, followed by many other poems and hymns. Influences of Shelley's poetry are said to be noticeable in his later work. He is remembered now chiefly as the author of some well-known hymns.

<sup>2</sup> Wordsworth's "A Poet's Epitaph" was written in 1799, and first published in the second volume of the "Lyrical Ballads," 1800, from which Shelley copied eight of the fifteen stanzas, with variations.

Wrapped closely in thy sensual fleece,  
 Pass quickly on : and take, I pray,  
 That he below may rest in peace,  
 Thy pin-point of a soul away.

\* \* \* \*

But who is he, with modest looks,  
 And clad in homely russet-brown,  
 Who murmurs near the running brooks  
 A music sweeter than their own ?

And you must love him, ere to you  
 He will seem worthy of your love.  
 All outward shows of sky and earth,  
 Of sea and valley, he hath viewed ;  
 And impulses of deeper birth  
 Have come to him in solitude.

I have transcribed a piece of Wordsworth's poetry. It may give you some idea of the Man. How expressively keen are the first stanzas ! I shall see this man soon.

I wish I knew your mother : I do not mean your natural but your moral mother. I have many thanks to give to her. I owe her much : more than I can hope to repay, yet not without the reach of an attempt at remuneration. I look forward to the time when you will *live* with us : I think you *ought* at some time. If then principle still directs you to take scholars, this will be no impediment : but I think you might be far more usefully employed. Your pen—so overflowing, so demonstrative, so impassioned—ought to trace characters for a nation's perusal, and not make grammar-books for children. This latter is undoubtedly a most useful employment : but who would consent that *such* powers should always be so employed ? This is, however, a subject of consideration for afterwards.

My Poems will make their appearance as soon as I can find a printer. As to the poem, I have for the present postponed its execution ; thinking that, if I can finish my essays, and a tale in which I design to exhibit the cause of the failure of the French Revolution, and the state of morals and opinions in France during the latter years of

QM?



its monarchy<sup>1</sup>.—Some of the leading passions of the human mind will of course have a place in its fabric. I design to exclude the sexual passion, and think the keenest satire on its intemperance will be complete silence on the subject. I have already done about 200 pages of this work, and about 150 of the essays.

Now, you can assist me, and you do assist me. I must censure my friend's inadequate opinion of herself; for truly inadequate must it be if it unequalizes our intellectual powers. Have confidence in yourself: dare to believe "I am great."

I fear you cannot read my crossed writing: indeed, I very much doubt whether the whole of my scribbling be not nearly illegible. Adieu, my dearest friend. Harriet sends her love. Eliza, her sister, is a very amiable girl. Her opinions are gradually rectifying; and altho' I have never spoken of her to you before, it is injustice to her to conceal [her] from you so long. I have said nothing of Godwin—nothing of a thousand topics I had to write on.—But I admire Godwin as much as you can. I shall write to him too to-day or to-morrow. I do not suppose that he will answer my address. I shall, however, call on him whenever I go to London. I am not sure that Southey is *quite* uninfluenced by venality. He is disinterested, so far as respects his family; but I question if he is so, as far as respects the world. His writings solely support a numerous family. His sweet children are such amiable creatures that I almost forgive what I suspect. His wife is very stupid: Mrs. Coleridge is worse. Mrs. Lovell<sup>[1]</sup>, who was once an actress, is the best of them<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> This sentence is left unfinished. Shelley speaks of a series of moral and metaphysical essays, which he contemplated writing, in his letter to Stockdale (No. 73). The tale seems to have been "Hubert Cauvin," mentioned later, which was never published.

<sup>2</sup> Southey shared Greta Hall with Coleridge, whose wife (*née* Fricker) was Mrs. Southey's sister. Mrs. Lovell, another of Mrs. Southey's sisters, was the widow of Robert Lovell (1770? -1796), a young poet who had participated with Coleridge and Southey in

Adieu, my friend and fellow-labourer ; and never think  
that I can be otherwise than devoted to you till annihilation.

Yours for ever,

P. B. SHELLEY.

Southey says I am not an Atheist, but a Pantheist.

[Addressed outside],

single sheet,

Miss HITCHENER,

Hurstpierpoint,

Brighton, Sussex.

Jan. 3, 1812.

## 112. TO WILLIAM GODWIN

(London)

KESWICK, CUMBERLAND,

January 3, 1812.

You will be surprised at hearing from a stranger. No introduction has, nor in all probability ever will authorize that which common thinkers would call a liberty ; it is, however, a liberty which, although not sanctioned by custom, is so far from being reprobated by reason, that the dearest interests of mankind imperiously demand that a certain etiquette of fashion should no longer keep "man at a distance from man," or impose its flimsy fancies between the free communication of intellect.

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the Pantisocratic scheme. He had estranged himself from his wealthy Quaker father by marrying, in 1794, Mary Fricker, who had attempted to help her bankrupt father by becoming an actress. Coleridge, Southey, and Lovell engaged to write a tragedy on "The Fall of Robespierre," but Lovell's contribution was rejected, and afterwards re-written by Southey. A volume entitled "Poems by Bion and Moschus," by Southey and Lovell, appeared at Bristol in 1794, and two years later Lovell died of a fever, being nursed during his illness by Mrs. Southey. The elder Lovell refused to assist his son's widow, on account of her former association with the stage, so Southey, with his never-failing generosity, provided her and her infant son with a home. Mrs. Lovell died at the age of ninety, having spent her remaining days, after Southey's death, with his daughter Kate.



*From a photo by Emery Walker, after a painting in the National Portrait Gallery,  
by James Northcote, R.A., dated 1802*

*William Goethe*





The name of Godwin has been used to excite in me feelings of reverence and admiration. I have been accustomed to consider him a luminary too dazzling for the darkness which surrounds him. From the earliest period of my knowledge of his principles, I have ardently desired to share, on the footing of intimacy, that intellect which I have delighted to contemplate in its emanations.

Considering, then, these feelings, you will not be surprised at the inconceivable emotions with which I learned your existence and your dwelling. I had enrolled your name in the list of the honourable dead. I had felt regret that the glory of your being had passed from this earth of ours. It is not so ; you still live, and, I firmly believe, are still planning the welfare of human kind.

I have but just entered on the scene of human operations ; yet my feelings and my reasonings correspond with what yours were. My course has been short, but eventful. I have seen much of human prejudice, suffered much from human persecution, yet I see no reason hence inferrible which should alter my wishes for their renovation. The ill treatment I have met with has more than ever impressed the truth of my principles on my judgment. I am young, I am ardent in the cause of philanthropy and truth ; do not suppose that this is vanity ; I am not conscious that it influences this portraiture. I imagine myself dispassionately describing the state of my mind. I am young ; you have gone before me, I doubt not are a veteran to me in the years of persecution. Is it strange that, defying prejudice as I have done, I should outstep the limits of custom's prescription, and endeavour to make my desire useful by a friendship with William Godwin ?

I pray you to answer this letter. Imperfect as may be my capacity, my desire is ardent and unintermitted. Half an hour would be at least humanely employed in the experiment. I may mistake your residence ; certain feelings, of which I may be an inadequate arbiter, may induce you to desire concealment ; I may not, in fine, have

an answer to this letter. If I do not, when I come to London, I shall seek for you. I am convinced I could represent myself to you in such terms as not to be thought wholly unworthy of your friendship; at least, if desire for universal happiness has any claim upon your preference, that desire I can exhibit. Adieu! I shall earnestly await your answer.

PERCY B. SHELLEY.

To Mr. WILLIAM GODWIN, at M. J. GODWIN'S,  
Juvenile Library, Skinner Street, London

113. TO ELIZABETH HITCHENER

(Lewes)

KESWICK, CUMBERLAND,

Jan. 7, 1812.

I have delayed writing to you for two days.—I wronged myself more than you. I have been partly unwilling to break in on some writings I am engaged in; partly in depression. Believe me with what pleasure I return to you.

My dearest friend, I have thought of you and this moment am resolved no longer to think *with* you. Do not fear—I shall not be prisoned. I am yet but a viper in the egg. they say, I have all the venom, but I cannot sting. Besides, they shall not get at me: they cannot. I shall refer to Blackstone: he will tell me what points are criminal, and what innocent, in the eye of the law. I do not therefore anticipate a prison. I need not tell you I do not fear it. But yes, I do. It would curtail much of our Harriet's happiness, it would excite too vividly your sympathy, and might obviate my performance of many acts of usefulness which if I have liberty I can effect. Godwin yet lives: if Government, at one time, could have destroyed any man, Godwin would have ceased to be. Thomas Pain[e] died a natural death: his writings were

far more violently in opposition to Government than mine perhaps ever will be. I desire to establish on a lasting basis the happiness of human-kind. Popular insurrections and revolutions I look upon with discountenance. *If such things must be*, I will take the side of the People ; but my reasonings shall endeavour to ward it from the hearts of the Rulers of the Earth, deeply as I detest them. How does Sir Thomas Burdett continue to live ? Certainly, if Mr. Percival could have killed him, I do believe he indubitably would have done so.<sup>1</sup> No, my dearest friend, fear not that I shall be destroyed. They cannot, they dare not : I do not dispute that they would if they could. Miss Adams<sup>2</sup>—I cannot pardon her for racking you with these fears : friend of my soul, cast them off. A beam from the house may destroy you : but I live in hopes that it will not. I feel assured that you are at Hurst in safety. If I did not think so, I could defy the Bishops themselves to paint a hell so red where I would not go to meet you. Harriet has written to you to-day. She has informed you of our plans. In a month I shall have completed a tale illustrative of the causes of the failure of the French Revolution to benefit mankind.

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<sup>1</sup> A slip of the pen for Sir Francis Burdett, Bart. (1770-1844), the Radical politician who, as Member for Westminster, had denounced the Government so mercilessly that when (in 1810) he indiscreetly denied the right of the House to commit a popular orator for libel, he was sent to the Tower. Sir Francis was ardently supported by the people, and released on the prorogation of Parliament. "It is evident," says Mr. MacCarthy in "*Shelley's Early Life*," p. 292, "that while Shelley was living at Lynmouth in 1812, he was in constant correspondence with Sir Francis Burdett ; in fact, his letters were so numerous as to attract the notice of the postmaster at Barnstaple, who communicated with Mr. (subsequently Sir) Francis Freeling." These letters have not been published ; perhaps they were not preserved. The Hon. Spencer Percival (1762-1812) was Chancellor of the Exchequer at the time of Shelley's letter, and three months later (May 11th, 1812), was assassinated in the lobby of the House of Commons by a madman.

<sup>2</sup> From the direction of this letter, Miss Hitchener had evidently been staying with her friend, Mrs. Adams, her former instructress, to whom she alludes as "the mother of my soul."

At the conclusion of that month we think of going to Dublin, where I shall print it; in May, to receive your visit in Wales—fifty miles nearer than Cumberland. In fact, my friend, at this Keswick, though the face of the country is lovely, the *people* are detestable. The manufacturers with their contamination have crept into the peaceful vale, and deformed the loveliness of Nature with human taint. The debauched servants of the great families who resort contribute to the total extinction of morality. Keswick seems more like a suburb of London than a village of Cumberland. Children are frequently found in the river, which the unfortunate women employed in the manufactory destroy. Wales is very different, and there you shall visit us. The distance is somewhat shorter, the scenery quite as beautiful. Southey says Expediency ought to [be] made the ground of politics, but not of morals. I urged that the most fatal error that ever happened in the world was the separation of political and ethical science; that the former ought to be entirely regulated by the latter, as whatever was a right criterion of action for an individual must be so for a society, which was but an assemblage of individuals; “that politics were morals comprehensively enforced.” Southey did not think the reasoning conclusive, he has a very happy knack when truth goes against him, of saying: “Oh! when you are as old as I am, you will think with me,” this talent he employed in the above instance. Nothing can well be more weak. If a thing exists, there can always be shown reasons for its existence. If there cannot, it still may exist, but never can be the subject of mortal faith.

You will see in my “Hubert Cauvin” (the name of the tale) that I have spoken of *expediency*, *insincerity*, *mystery*; adherence to which I do not consider the remotest occasion of violence and blood in the French Revolution. Indeed, their fatal effects are to be traced in every one instance of human life where vice and misery enter into the features of the portraiture. I do not think so highly of Southey



as I did. It is to be confessed that to see him in his family, to behold him in his domestic circle, he appears in a most amiable light.—I do not mean that he is or can be the great character which once I linked him to. His mind is terribly narrow, compared to it. *Once he was* this character,—everything you can conceive of practised virtue.—Now he is corrupted by the world, contaminated by Custom : it rends my heart when I think what he might have been ! Wordsworth and Coleridge I have yet to see. I now send you some Poetry : the subject is not fictitious. It is the overflowings of the mind this morning.

### MOTHER AND SON

She was an aged woman, and the years  
Which she had numbered on her toilsome way  
Had bowed her natural powers to decay.  
She was an aged woman ; yet the ray  
Which faintly glimmered through her starting tears,  
Pressed into light by silent misery,  
Hath soul's imperishable energy—  
She was a cripple, and incapable  
To add one mite to gold-fed luxury :  
And therefore did her spirit dimly feel  
That poverty, the crime of tainting stain,  
Would merge her in its depths, never to rise again.

### II

One only son's love had supported her.  
She long had struggled with infirmity,  
Lingering to human life-scenes ; for to die,  
When fate has spared to rend some mental tie,  
Would many wish, and surely fewer dare.  
But, when the tyrant's bloodhounds forced the child  
For his curst power unhallowed arms to wield,  
Bend to another's will, become a thing  
More senseless than the sword of battlefield—  
Then did she feel keen sorrow's keenest sting ;  
And many years had passed ere comfort they would bring.

### III

For seven years did this poor woman live  
In unparticipated solitude.  
Thou mightst have seen her in the forest rude  
Picking the scattered remnants of its wood.

If human, thou mightst then have learned to feel.  
 The gleanings of precarious charity  
 Her scantiness of food did scarce supply.  
 The proofs of an unspeaking sorrow dwelt  
 Within her ghastly hollowness of eye :  
 Each arrow of the season's change she felt.  
 Yet still she groans, ere yet her race were run,  
 One only hope : it was—once more to see her son.

## IV

It was an eve of June, when every star  
 Spoke peace from heaven. . . .  
 She rested on the moor. 'Twas such an eve  
 When first her soul began indeed to grieve :  
 Then he was there ; now he is very far !  
 The sweetness of the balmy evening  
 A sorrow o'er her aged soul did fling,  
 Yet not devoid of rapture's mingled tear :  
 A balm was in the poison of the sting !  
 The aged sufferer for many a year  
 Had never felt such comfort. She suppressed  
 A sigh—and, turning round, clasped William to her breast !

## V

And, tho' his form was wasted by the woe  
 Which tyrants on their victims love to wreak,  
 Tho' his sunk eyeballs and his faded cheek  
 Of slavery's violence and scorn did speak,  
 Yet did the aged woman's bosom glow !  
 The vital fire seemed reillumed within  
 By this sweet unexpected welcoming.  
 Oh consummation of the fondest hope  
 That ever soared on fancy's wildest wing !  
 O tenderness that found'st so sweet a scope !  
 Prince who dost pride thee on thy mighty sway,  
 When thou canst feel such love, thou shalt be great as they.

## VI

Her son, compelled, the country's foes had fought,  
 Had bled in battle ; and the stern control  
 Which ruled his sinews and coerced his soul  
 Utterly poisoned life's unmingled bowl,  
 And unsubduable evils on him brought.  
 He was the shadow of the lusty child  
 Who, when the time of summer season smiled,  
 Did earn for her a meal of honesty,  
 And with affectionate discourse beguiled  
 The keen attacks of pain and poverty ;  
 Till Power, as envying her this only joy,  
 From her maternal bosom tore the unhappy boy.

## VII

And now cold charity's unwelcome dole  
 Was insufficient to support the Pair;  
 And they *would perish rather than would bear*  
*The law's stern slavery, and the insolent stare*  
 With which law loves to rend the poor man's soul—  
 The bitter scorn, the spirit-sinking noise  
 Of heartless mirth which women, men, and boys,  
 Wake in this scene of legal misery.

. . . . .

The facts are real: that recorded in the last fragment of a stanza is literally true. The poor man said: "None of my family ever came to *parish*, and I *would* starve first. I am a poor man; but I could never hold my head up after that."—Adieu, my dearest friend. Think of the poetry which I have inserted as a picture of my feelings, not a specimen of my art. I shall write to you soon again. Your letters give me perpetual food for thought and discussion. Southey has got off more hardly than he otherwise would have done, in consequence of them. Not that I ever will abet expediency, either in morals or politics. I never will do ill that good may come, at least, so far.

Adieu. Harriet desires her love. My dearest friend, adieu.

Your *eternal*

PERCY B. S.

I find you begin to doubt the eternity of the soul: I do not.—More of that hereafter.

[Addressed outside],  
 single sheet,  
 Miss HITCHENER,  
 Hurstpierpoint,  
 Brighton, Sussex.

[Re-directed to]  
 Mrs. ADAMS,  
 School Hall,  
 Lewes.

[Postmark], Brighton, 12 Jan., 1812.

114. TO WILLIAM GODWIN  
(London)

KESWICK,

January 10, 1812.

SIR,

It is not otherwise to be supposed than that I should appreciate your avocations far beyond the pleasure or benefit which can accrue to me from their sacrifice. The time, however, will be small which may be mis-spent in reading this letter ; and much individual pleasure as an answer might give me, I have not the vanity to imagine that it will be greater than the happiness elsewhere diffused during the time which its creation will occupy.

You complain that the generalizing character of my letter renders it deficient in interest ; that I am not an individual to you. Yet, intimate as I am with your character and your writings, intimacy with *yourself* must in some degree precede this exposure of my peculiarities. It is scarcely possible, however pure be the morality which he has endeavoured to diffuse, but that generalization must characterize the uninvited address of a stranger to a stranger.

I proceed to remedy the fault. I am the son of a man of fortune in Sussex. The habits of thinking of my father and myself never coincided. Passive obedience was inculcated and enforced in my childhood. I was required to love, because it was *my duty* to love : it is scarcely necessary to remark, that coercion obviated its own intention. I was haunted with a passion for the wildest and most extravagant romances. Ancient books of Chemistry and Magic were perused with an enthusiasm of wonder, almost amounting to belief. My sentiments were unrestrained by anything within me ; external impediments were numerous, and strongly applied ; their effect was merely temporary.

From a reader, I became a writer of romances ; before



the age of seventeen I had published two,<sup>1</sup> "St. Irvyne" and "Zastrozzi," each of which, though quite uncharacteristic of me as now I am, yet serves to mark the state of my mind at the period of their composition. I shall desire them to be sent to you: do not, however, consider this as any obligation to yourself to misapply your valuable time.

It is now a period of more than two years since first I saw your inestimable book on "Political Justice;"<sup>2</sup> it opened to my mind fresh and more extensive views; it materially influenced my character, and I rose from its perusal a wiser and a better man. I was no longer the votary of romance; till then I had existed in an ideal world—now I found that in this universe of ours was enough to excite the interest of the heart, enough to employ the discussions of reason; I beheld, in short, that I had duties to perform. Conceive the effect which the "Political Justice" would have upon a mind before jealous of its independence and participating somewhat singularly in a peculiar susceptibility.

My age is now *nineteen*; at the period to which I allude I was at Eton. No sooner had I formed the principles

<sup>1</sup> Here Shelley was in error: he was born on August 4th, 1792; "Zastrozzi" was published in June, 1810, when he was seventeen and ten months, and "St. Irvyne" appeared in December of the same year, when he was four months over eighteen. Thomas Medwin, in his recollections of Shelley's school-days at Zion House Academy, Brentford, speaks of his love of reading, and especially refers to certain *blue* books "that were to be bought for sixpence, and embodied stories of haunted castles, bandits, murderers, and other grim personages"—his special favourite was "Peter Wilkins," which made him wish "for a winged wife, and little winged cherubs of children. . . ." Richardson, Fielding and Smollett were little to Shelley's taste. Anne Radcliffe's works pleased him most, particularly "The Italian," but the Rosa-Matilda school, especially a strange, wild romance entitled "Zofloya, or the Moor," a Monk-Lewis production, where his Satanic Majesty, as in "Faust," plays the chief part, enraptured him. The two novels he afterwards wrote, entitled "Zastrozzi" and " [St. Irvyne or] The Rosicrucian," were modelled after this ghostly production.—"Life of Shelley," Vol. I, pp. 29-31.

<sup>2</sup> Shelley requests Stockdale to send him a copy of "Political Justice" in a letter from Oxford, Nov. 19, 1810. He may, however, already have seen the book before that date.

which I now profess, than I was anxious to disseminate their benefits. This was done without the slightest caution. I was twice expelled, but recalled by the interference of my father. I went to Oxford. Oxonian society was insipid to me, uncongenial with my habits of thinking. I could not descend to common life : the sublime interest of poetry, lofty and exalted achievements, the proselytism of the world, the equalization of its inhabitants, were to me the soul of my soul. You can probably form some idea of the contrast exhibited to my character by those with whom I was surrounded. Classical reading and poetical writing employed me during my residence at Oxford.

In the meantime I became, in the popular sense of the word " God," an Atheist. I printed a pamphlet, avowing my opinion, and its occasion. I distributed this anonymously to men of thought and learning, wishing that Reason should decide on the case at issue ; it was never my intention to deny it. Mr. Coplestone, at Oxford, among others, had the pamphlet ; he showed it to the Master and the Fellows of University College, and *I* was sent for. I was informed, that in case I denied the publication, no more would be said. I refused, and was expelled.

It will be necessary, in order to elucidate this part of my history, to inform you that I am heir by entail to an estate of £6,000 per annum. My principles have induced me to regard the law of primogeniture an evil of primary magnitude. My father's notions of family honour are incoincident with my knowledge of public good. I will never sacrifice the latter to any consideration. My father has ever regarded me as a blot, a defilement of his honour. He wished to induce me by poverty to accept of some commission in a distant regiment, and in the interim of my absence to prosecute the pamphlet, that a process of outlawry might make the estate, on his death, devolve to my younger brother. These are the leading points of the history of the man before you. Others exist, but I have thought proper to make some selection, not that it is my

design to conceal or extenuate any part, but that I should by their enumeration quite outstep the bounds of modesty. Now, it is for you to judge whether, by permitting me to cultivate your friendship, you are exhibiting yourself more really useful than by the pursuance of those avocations, of which the time spent in allowing this cultivation would deprive you. I am now earnestly pursuing studious habits. I am writing "An inquiry into the causes of the failure of the French Revolution to benefit mankind." My plan is that of resolving to lose no opportunity to disseminate truth and happiness.

I am married to a woman whose views are similar to my own. To you, as the regulator and former of my mind, I must ever look with real respect and veneration.

Yours sincerely,

P. B. SHELLEY.

To Mr. WILLIAM GODWIN, London.

115. TO WILLIAM GODWIN

(London)

KESWICK,

Jan[uary] 16, 1812.

MY DEAR SIR,

That so prompt and so kind an answer should have relieved my mind I had scarcely dared to hope ; to find that he—who as an author had gained my love and confidence, whose views and habits I had delighted to conjecture from his works, whose principles I had adopted, and every trace of whose existence is now made sacred, and I hope, eternally so, by associations, which throw the charm of feeling over the deductions of reason—that he, as a man, should be my friend and my adviser the moderator of my enthusiasm, the personal exciter and strengthener of my virtuous habits : all this was more than I dared to trust

myself to hope, and which now comes to me almost like a ray of second existence.

Without the deceit of self-flattery, which might lead me to think that my intellectual powers demanded your time, those circumstances, which arbitrarily—or, as may be said, fortuitously—place me in a situation capable hereafter of considerably influencing the actions of others, induce me to think that I shall not “in publica commoda peccem, si longo sermone morer tua tempora.”

I know not how to describe the pleasure which your last letter has given me ; that William Godwin should have a “deep and earnest interest in *my* welfare,” cannot but produce the most intoxicating sensations. It may be my vanity which is thus flattered, but I am much deceived in myself, if love and respect for the great and worthy form not a very considerable part of my feelings.

I cannot help considering you as a friend and adviser, whom I have known very long ; this circumstance must generate a degree of familiarity, which will cease to appear surprising to you, when the intimacy, which I had acquired with your writings, so much preceded the information which led to my first letter. It may be said, that I have derived little benefit or injury from artificial education. I have known no tutor or adviser (*not excepting my father*) from whose lessons and suggestions I have not recoiled with disgust.

The knowledge which I have, whatever it may be (putting out of the question the age of the grammar and the horn-book) has been acquired by my unassisted efforts. I have before given you a slight sketch of my earlier habits and feelings—my present are, in my own opinion, infinitely superior—they are elevated and disinterested : such as they are, *you* have principally produced them.

With what delight, what cheerfulness, what good will, may it be conceived, that I constitute myself the pupil of him, under whose actual guidance my very thoughts have hitherto been arranged.



You mistake me, if you think that I am angry with my father. I have ever been desirous of a reconciliation with him, but the price which he demands for it is a renunciation of my opinions, or, at least, a subjection to conditions which should bind me to act in opposition to their very spirit. It is probable that my father has *acted* for my welfare, but the manner in which he has done so will not allow me to suppose that he has *felt* for it, unconnectedly with certain considerations of birth; and feeling for these things was not feeling for me. I never loved my father—it was not from hardness of heart, for I have loved and do love warmly.

You say, "Being yet a scholar, I ought to have no intolerable itch to become a teacher." I have not, so far as any publications of mine are irreconcilable with the general good, or so far as they are negative. I do not set up for a judge of controversies, but into whatever company I go I have introduced my own sentiments, partly with a view, if they were any wise erroneous, that unforeseen elucidations might rectify them; or, if they were not, that I should contribute my mite to the treasury of Wisdom and Happiness. I hope, in the course of our communication, to acquire that sobriety of spirit which is the characteristic of true heroism. I have not heard, without benefit, that Newton was a modest man; I am not ignorant that vanity and folly delight in forwardness and assumption. But I think there is a line to be drawn between affectation of unpossessed talents and the deceit of self-distrust, by which much power has been lost to the world; for

Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,  
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

This line may be called "the modesty of nature." I hope I am somewhat anxious not to outstep its boundaries. I will not again crudely obtrude the question of atheism on the world. But could I not, at the same time, improve my own powers and diffuse true and virtuous principles?

Many with equally confined talents to my own are by publications scattering the seeds of prejudice and selfishness. Might not an exhibition of truth, with equal elegance and depth, suffice to counteract the deleterious tendency of their principles? Does not writing hold the next place to colloquial discussion in eliciting and classing the powers of the mind? I am willing to become a scholar—nay, a pupil. My humility and confidence, where I am conscious that I am not imposed upon, and where I perceive talents and powers so certainly and undoubtedly superior, is unfeigned and complete. I have desired the publications of my early youth to be sent to you. You will perceive that “Zastrozzi” and “St. Irvyne” were written prior to my acquaintance with your writings—the “Essay on Love,” a little poem<sup>1</sup>—since. I had, indeed, read “St. Leon” before I wrote “St. Irvyne,” but the reasonings had *then* made little impression.

In a few days we set off to Dublin. I do not know exactly where we shall be; but a letter addressed to Keswick will find me. Our journey has been settled some time. We go principally to *forward as much as we can* the Catholic Emancipation.

Southey, the poet, whose principles were pure and elevated once, is now the paid champion of every abuse and absurdity. I have had much conversation with him. He says, “You will think as I do when you are as old.” I do not feel the least disposition to be Mr. S.’s proselyte.

In the summer we shall be in the north of Wales. Dare I hope that you will come to see us? Perhaps this is

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<sup>1</sup> Mr. D. F. MacCarthy suggests that as Shelley does not mention in this list of his publications “The Poetical Essay on the Existing State of Things,” he may here refer to it under “the altered title of the ‘Essay on Love.’ The word ‘Essay’ gives great probability to this supposition” (“Shelley’s Early Life,” p. 105). “It seems likely,” says Mr. Forman (“Shelley Library,” p. 16), “that the ‘Essay on Love’ was one of the occasional trifles which *A Newspaper Editor* believed to have been printed at Horsham at the cost of Sir Bysshe.”

an unfeasible neglect of your avocations. I shall hope it until you forbid me.

I remain, with the greatest respect,  
Your most sincere and devoted,  
PERCY B. SHELLEY.

To Mr. WILLIAM GODWIN, London.

116. TO ELIZABETH HITCHENER  
(Hurstpierpoint)

[KESWICK, CUMBERLAND,  
January 20, 1812.]

It is now a whole week since I have addressed my friend, my dearest friend, the partner of my thoughts. But the thought of you has enlivened and animated my intermediate employments; has added pleasure to the pleasure which I have received; and has contributed, with my dear Harriet's love, to disarm a terrible headache which I have had. I have been obliged, by an accession of nervous attack, to take a quantity of laudanum, which I did very unwillingly and reluctantly, and which I should not have done, had I been alone:—I am now quite recovered. When the mind is at ease, illness does not continue long. I have something to tell you. *Godwin* has answered my letters, and he is now my *friend*; he shall be yours—share with me this acquisition, more valuable than the gifts of Princes. His letters are like his writings, the mirror of a firm and elevated mind. They are the result of the experience of ages, which he condenses for my instruction. It is with awe and veneration that I read the letters of this veteran in persecution and independence. He remains unchanged. I have no soul-chilling alteration to record of his character, the unmoderated enthusiasm of humanity still characterizes him. He preserves those principles of extensive and independent action which alone can give energy and



vigor. Like Southey he does not change. The age of the body has [not] induced the age of the soul: tho' his shell is mouldering, the spirit within seems in no wise to participate in the decay. I have unfolded to him the leading traits of my character, and the leading events of my life. I have certainly won his good opinion. He says: "At present I feel for you all those motives of interest that can be crowded into the case of a young man I never saw. First, you appear to be in some degree the pupil of my writings; and I feel so far as if I were in a measure responsible for your conduct. Secondly, from your account of what you have done (tho' nothing you have written has fallen in my way), I cannot but conclude that you possess extraordinary powers. Thirdly, as a man of family born to a considerable fortune, it is of the more importance how you conduct yourself; for money is one of the means a man may possess of being extremely useful to his species."

But you shall see his letters; *perhaps* shall see himself. Oh if he would come to Wales, and meet you. I think he is old, but age with *Godwin*, must be but the perfecting of his abilities, but the fruit of that blossom that unfolded itself so beautifully in adolescence.—Adieu to Godwin. Now of Southey. He has *lost* my good opinion. No private virtues can compensate for public language like this. The following passage is Southey's writing: the *Ed[inburgh] An[nual] Register*. "We are not displeased at the *patriotic* expedient to which *the worthy Sir Francis*" (italics in original) "has thus recourse; as it seems to show how contemptible are the Burdettite and Wardleite members, whose nature is debased by the vile views of faction, and whose unmanly feelings and ungenerous hearts forbid their sympathy in a case which—to the everlasting honour of the country be it related—so deeply interests" (speaking of Spain) "with keen solicitude the fond bosoms of a people"—(now mark this disgusting abominable flattery, and horrible lie—I can't contain myself)—"who, in duly appreciating his transcendent virtues, prove themselves



deserving the best Monarch that ever adorned a throne."—Now what think you of this? I can only exclaim with Bolingbroke, "Poor human nature!" We have now serious thoughts of immediately going to Ireland. Southey's conversation has lost its charm; except it be the charm of horror at so hateful a prostitution of talents. I hasten to go to Ireland. I am now writing an "Address" to the poor Irish Catholics.<sup>1</sup> Part of it will be in the following strain. After describing their miseries, I select you a passage which may give you some idea of my views.—"Think of your children, and your children's children; and take great care (for it all rests with you) that whilst one tyranny is destroyed, another more fierce and terrible, does not spring up. Take care of smooth-faced men who talk indeed of freedom, but who will cheat you into slavery.—Can there be worse slavery than depending for the safety of your souls on another man? Is one man more favored than another by God? No: if God makes any distinction, they are favored according to the good they do, not according to the rank or profession they hold. God loves a poor man as well as a priest, Jesus Christ has

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<sup>1</sup> "An Address, / to the / Irish People, / By Percy Bysshe Shelley. / Advertisement / Dublin: / 1812. / Price 5d." The advertisement is as follows: "*The lowest possible price is set on this publication, because it is the intention of the Author to awaken in the minds of the Irish poor, a knowledge of their real state, and suggesting rational means of remedy.—Catholic Emancipation, and a Repeal of the Union Act (the latter, the most successful engine that England ever wielded over the misery of fallen Ireland,) being treated of in the following address, as grievances which unanimity and resolution may remove, and association, conducted with peaceable firmness, being earnestly recommended, as means for embodying that unanimity and firmness, which must finally be successful.*" Shelley sent the first sheet of the pamphlet in proof, or as it was being printed, to Miss Hitchener, apparently on Feb. 20, and an early copy to Godwin on Feb. 24, 1812. On the following day it was advertised in the *Dublin Evening Post*, as "This day is published, price Fivepence, to be had of all the Booksellers." Shelley, in writing to Miss Hitchener on January 26th, says that the "Address to the Irish will be printed as Paine's works are, and pasted on the walls of Dublin." The typography and the coarse paper of the pamphlet certainly bear resemblance to the cheap editions of Paine's tracts.

said as much, he has given him a soul as much to himself. The worship that a good Being must love is that of a simple affectionate heart that shows its purity in good doings, and not in ceremonies, confessions, masses, burials, wonders, and processions. Take care that you are not led away by these things. Doubt everything that leads you not to love and charity with all men, and think of the word "heretic" as of a word invented by some selfish knave for the ruin and misery of the world, to answer his own paltry and narrow ambition." You see my friend what I am about. I consider that the state of Ireland as constituting a part of a great crisis in opinions. You shall see the pamphlet when it comes out: it will be cheaply printed, and printed in large sheets to be stuck about the walls of Dublin. I am eager and earnest to be there, and [? wish] that you were with me. My true and dear friend, why should we be separated? When may we unite? What might we not do, if together. If two hearts panting for the happiness and liberty of mankind, were joined by union and proximity, as they are by friendship and sympathy. What might we not expect? certainly a more extended proselytism than either separately can effectuate. How Harriet and her sister long to see you and how *I* long to see you, never to part with you again. How I could tell to you a thousand feelings and thoughts to which letters are inadequate; how plans that now die away unformed, might *then* be elicited and modified! We might write, and talk, and hypothesize, theorize, and reason. Oh let the time come. It may and will neither be to-day nor to-morrow, nor this month nor next: but *write* of it in your next I entreat you. The ties that bind you to Hurst are not eternal; and it will be worth while to consider, since you are destined to move in an eccentric and *comprehensive* orbit, how far your duties at H[urst] are compatible with these, or how far they are to be neglected if a wider field is exhibited. Have you any idea of *marrying*? I do not think from several things you have

said on that subject that you have. It does not appear to me that there is any friend sufficiently dear to you. I might have omitted this question. I will do as much : I will answer it. You have not. Then you shall live with us,—at least—some time hence. This time shall be indefinite now. Harriet is above the littleness of jealousy, of which you at first suspected her. She will see this letter ; and already feels for you the same kind of affection that I do, though not with the same intensity. Certainly, any one who got hold of this letter would think I was a Bedlamite . . well, you do not ; and my reputation for *madness* is too well-established to gain any firmness or addition from this letter.

I have received your note from Brighton (I make more differences between acquaintances, and friends or dear friends, than between notes, letters, and volumes). What bears and monkeys should I suppose were your associates, if you did not add to their happiness ! or rather would they not be stones, putrifactions ? You certainly tell me *ce?* truism when you egotize at all. This is owing to your want of vanity, or rather want of self-sufficiency, a little more of which I wish to make you have.—I love you to talk of yourself : it is more to me than all you can say on any other subject. Not but what everything that you say gives me the greatest pleasure. I have heard from my uncle,<sup>1</sup> who is going to send me £50.—Despairing of his power to do so, I had previously written to request the D[uke] of Norfolk to lend me £100 : so, if the Duke complies, we shall be very rich. I shall likewise make money in Ireland. All the money I get shall be squeezed out of the rich. The poor cannot understand and would not buy my poems : therefore I shall print them expensively. My metaphysics will be also printed expensively,—the first edition, that is (I am vain enough to hope for a second). The “ Address to the Irish ” shall be printed very cheap,

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<sup>1</sup> Captain Pilfold.



and I shall wilfully lose money by it. I shall distribute [it] throughout Ireland, either personally or by means of booksellers. The novel<sup>1</sup> will be printed cheaply.—How do you get on about money? This is a vile question to mention in our correspondence, but tell me. Pecuniary obligations are things too silly to be named among us: I never feel these things. I have reasons for my insensibility. It all depends on love of fame, and fear of infamy; which but for the opportunities which the one gives and the other takes away of being beneficent, are entitled to our completest contempt. *Answer this.*

Here follows a few stanzas which may amuse you. I was once rather fond of the Devil.<sup>2</sup>

## I

The Devil went out a-walking one day,  
 Being tired of staying in Hell.  
 He dressed himself in his Sunday array;  
 And the reason that he was dressed so gay  
     Was to cunningly pry  
     Whether under the sky  
 The affairs of earth went well.

## II

He poked his hot nose into corners so small  
 One would think that the innocents there,  
 Poor creatures! were just doing nothing at all,  
 But settling some dress, or arranging some ball:  
 The Devil saw deeper there.

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<sup>1</sup> "Hubert Cauvin."

<sup>2</sup> Shelley afterwards re-wrote this poem (which is obviously in imitation of the verses by Southey and Coleridge), and printed it as a broadside, it may be surmised, in Dublin. While living at Lynmouth, in August of this year, Shelley instructed Daniel Hill, the Irishman in his employment, to distribute the "Devil's Walk" and "The Declaration of Rights" (another of Shelley's broadsides), but the man was apprehended at Barnstaple and imprisoned for distributing printed papers without a printer's name. The two broadsides were discovered by Mr. W. M. Rossetti in the Public Record Office, and made known to the public in his article in *The Fortnightly Review* for January 1, 1871. See also MacCarthy's "Shelley's Early Life," pp. 347-351.



## III

He peeped in each hole, to each chamber stole,  
 His promising live-stock to view.  
 Grinning applause  
 He just shows his claws :  
 And Satan laughed in the mirth of his soul  
 That they started with fright  
 From *his* ugly sight  
 Whose works they delighted to do.

## IV

A Parson with whom, in the house of prayer,  
 The Devil sate side by side,  
 Bawled out that, if the Devil were [there],  
 His presence he couldn't abide.  
 "Ha ha !" thought Old Nick,  
 "That's a very stale trick :  
 For, without the Devil,  
 O favourite of evil,  
 In thy carriage thou wouldst not ride !"

## V

He saw the Devil [? a Lawyer] a viper slay  
 Under his brief-covered table :  
 It reminded the Devil marvellously  
 Of the story of Cain and Abel.

## VI

Satan next saw a brainless king ;  
 Many imps he saw near there on the wing :  
 In a house as hot as his own.  
 They flapped the black pennon, and twisted the sting,  
 Close to the very throne.

## VII

"Ah ah !" cried Satan, "the pasture is good !  
 My cattle will here thrive better than others !  
 They will have for their food  
 News of human blood :  
 They will drink the groans of the dying and dead,  
 And supperless never will go to bed,  
 Which will make 'em as fat as their brothers."

## VIII

The Devil was walking in the Park,  
 Dressed like a Bond Street beau :  
 Nor, although his visage was rather dark,  
 And his mouth was wide, his chin came out,  
 And something like Castlereagh was his snout,  
 He might be called so-so.

## IX

Why does the Devil grin so wide,  
 And show the horse teeth within ?—  
 Nine and ninety on each side,  
 By the clearest reckoning !

Here the poetry ends. The fact is, he saw the Prince reviewing a regiment of hussars. Well, is not this trifling ? A most teasing thing if you are not in a laughing mood. But I can laugh or weep with you. Well, write soon. We are not going to Ireland this week or next, but soon, I hope. I have changed the shape of my paper, because I am afraid they make you pay double ; and you are a very naughty girl if you do this.

Harriet will write soon : she sends her love to you. By the bye, tell Mrs. Adams that I love her, and will see her whenever I come to Sussex. Do not make your seal so large, for you destroy a great deal of what I value.

Yours beyond this being

*Most imperishably,*

P. B. S.

You have said no more of the immortality of the soul. Do you not believe it ? I do ; but I cannot tell you why in a letter—at least, not clearly. You will want some feelings which are to me cogent and resistless arguments. Do not consider it a gloomy subject : do not think me prejudiced. We *will* reason, and abide by the result. I shall get Godwin's opinion of this when I can.

[Addressed outside],  
 single sheet,

Miss HITCHENER,  
 Capt. PILFOLD'S,  
 Cuckfield, Sussex.

[Re-directed to]  
 Hurstpierpoint,  
 Brighton,

[Postmark], Jan. 20, 1812.

117. TO ELIZABETH HITCHENER  
(Hurstpierpoint)

[KESWICK, CUMBERLAND],

Jan[uary] 26, 1812.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

I eagerly answer your letter. It contains very bad news, I grieve at human nature ; but am so far from despairing that I can readily trace all that is evil, even in the youngest, to the sophistications of society. It will not appear surprising that some original taint of our nature has been adopted as an opinion by the unthinking, when they perceive how very early depraved dispositions are exhibited. But, when it is considered what exhaustless pains are taken by nurses and Parents to make wrong impressions on the infant mind, I cannot be surprised at the earliest traits of evil and mistake. I truly sympathize with your wrongs, these are, however, of such a nature as will so frequently occur that we must strive to consider them with unfeelingness, and let conscious rectitude inspire an honourable pride which shall infuse elevated tranquillity into the soul. —I did not expect this return of kindness from Anne<sup>1</sup> ; she is a character who will now mingle in the mass of common life : the seeds which you have sown will spring up among tares and brambles, the dreary intercourse of daily life will blast the suckers ere they even attain adolescence. Here is an addition to that daily load of disappointment which weighs upon the mind, and checks the passionateness of hope. I will, however, cling to those who are deservedly *now* the landing-places of my expectancy ; and, when they fail, human nature will be to me an unweeded garden, and the face of Earth hold no monster so heartless and unnatural as Man. Think not for one moment that I have doubted you. The confidence that

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<sup>1</sup> See p. 193.

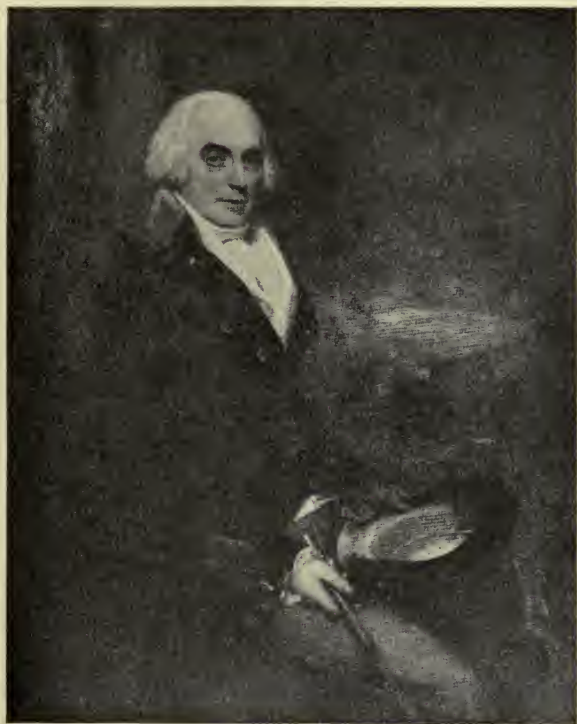
I have in the purity and immutableness of your principles surpasses even that which I possess of my own.—These expressions are blasphemous to love and friendship, think of them as of the ebullitions of a train of fleeting thought, as of the cloud which momentarily obscures the moon, then sails into the azure of night.—Harriet has told you of a circumstance which has alarmed her<sup>1</sup>. I consider it as a complete casual occurrence which, having met with once, we are more likely not to meet with again. The Man evidently wanted to rifle my pockets: my falling within the house defeated his intention. There is nothing in this to alarm you. I was afraid you might see it in the newspaper, and fancy that the blow had injured me. Dismiss all fears of assassins and spies and prisons. Let me have your confident hopes of safety and success, as well as the earnest good wishes which I fancy I hear you breathing to fill the sails of our packet, and be like ministrant angels to us. All is now prepared for Ireland, except the arrival of our £100, daily expected from Whitton the attorney. (By-the-bye, my father has allowed me £200 per ann[um], attended with the compliment that he did it to *prevent my cheating strangers*.) All is prepared. I have been busily engaged in an "Address to the Irish," which will be printed as Paine's works were, and pasted on the walls of Dublin. My Poems will be printed there, "Hubert [Cauvin]," and the Essays.

We shall then meet in Wales. I shall try to domesticate

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<sup>1</sup> Harriet's letter to Miss Hitchener (to which she and Shelley refer) has been lost. It contained particulars of an assault made on Shelley about seven o'clock on Sunday night, January 19. "Alarmed by an unusual noise, he went to the door of his cottage, opened it and instantly received a blow which struck him to the ground, where for a time he remained senseless. Mr. Dare, his landlord, hearing the disturbance, rushed into the house, and the assailants, perceiving that he was alarmed, fled immediately." Professor Dowden gives this account from a contemporary description of the assault in the *Cumberland Pacquet*. Certain residents in Keswick regarded the affair as nothing more serious than a dream or hallucination of Shelley's brain. ("Life of Shelley," Vol. I, p. 227.)





*From a painting by Sir William Beechey in the possession of Sir John Shelley, Bt. By permission of the Editor of "The Connoisseur"*

SIR BYSSHE SHELLEY



in some antique feudal castle whose mouldering turrets are fit emblems of decaying inequality and oppression ; whilst the ivy shall wave its green banners above like Liberty, and flourish upon the edifice that essayed to crush its root. As to the ghosts, I shall welcome them, altho' Harriet protests against my invoking them. But they would tell tales of times of old ; and it would add to the picturesqueness of the scenery to see their thin forms flitting through the vaulted charnels. Perhaps the Captain will come, and my aunt and the little things : perhaps you will bring the dear little Americans,<sup>1</sup> and my mother, Mrs. Adams. Perhaps *Godwin* will come—I shall try to induce him.—These castles are somewhat aërial at present, but I hope it is not a crime, in this mortal life, to solace ourselves with hopes. Mine are always rather visionary. In the basis of this scheme, however, if you and I live, we will not be disappointed. I hear from my uncle that Sir B[ysshe] Shelley<sup>2</sup> is not likely to live long—that he will

<sup>1</sup> Miss Hitchener's pupils. See p. 175.

<sup>2</sup> Sir Bysshe Shelley, Bart. (1731-1815) the grandfather of Percy Bysshe Shelley, was the son of Timothy Shelley of Christ Church, Newark, New Jersey, where he was born on June 21st, 1731. Beginning life with little or no fortune, Bysshe Shelley (according to Medwin) exercised the profession of a quack doctor, and married the widow of a miller. There is nothing to support this statement, the truth of which even the inaccurate Medwin will not vouch. No mention is made of this early marriage in the pedigree (printed by Mr. Buxton Forman in the first volume of his edition of Shelley's Prose works), and the church records at Newark are said to have been destroyed by the King's troops in the American War. The rumour may, however, have given rise to Shelley's allusion to Sir Bysshe's three wives. Six feet high, remarkably handsome and possessed of polished manners and address, Bysshe Shelley had returned to England by 1751, for in that year, at the age of twenty-one, he married, without the consent of her guardians, an heiress, Mary Catherine, daughter of the Rev. Theobald Michell, by whom he had a son Timothy (father of the poet) and two daughters, and became possessed of the property of Field Place, Horsham. Mrs. Shelley died at the age of twenty-six, and nine years after her death Bysshe Shelley married another heiress, Elizabeth Jane Sydney, daughter of William Perry, of Penshurst, Kent, who was descended from the family of Sir Philip Sydney, and who bore him three sons and two daughters. Her first son became the baronet.

soon die. He is a complete atheist, and builds all his hopes on annihilation. He has acted very ill to three wives. He is a bad man. I never had respect for him: I always regarded him as a curse on society. I shall not grieve at his death. I will not wear mourning: I will not attend his funeral. I shall think of his departure as of that of a hard-hearted reprobate. I will never countenance a lying estimation of my own feelings. I have the vanity to think that you will be pleased with my "Address to the Irish." It is intended to familiarize to uneducated apprehensions ideas of liberty, benevolence, *peace*, and toleration. It is *secretly* intended also as a preliminary to other pamphlets to shake Catholicism on its basis, and to induce Quakerish and Socinian principles of politics, without objecting to the Christian religion, which would be no good to the vulgar just now, and cast an odium over the other principles which are advanced. The volume of poetry will be I fear an inferior production: it will be only valuable to philosophical and reflecting minds who love to trace the early state of human feelings and opinions,—who can make allowances for some bad versification. None is more qualified than yourself my friend to come to a right judgment on this score, tho' a consideration of your

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Sir John Shelley-Sydney, of Penshurst, and his son was in 1835 created Baron de l'Isle and Dudley. Bysshe Shelley, a staunch Whig, and an adherent to the Duke of Norfolk's party, was rewarded for his loyalty in 1806 with a baronetcy. Though he had built Castle Goring at a cost of more than £80,000, he latterly became miserly and eccentric in his habits, and lived during the last twenty or thirty years of his life in a small cottage at Horsham, waited on by a single servant, and he frequented the village tap-rooms. He seems to have been generally disliked by his family, and especially by his son Timothy, but he showed an interest in his grandson Percy. In the "Newspaper Editor's Reminiscences," printed in *Fraser's Magazine* for June, 1841, it is stated that Sir Bysshe used to supply Shelley with money, and would defray the printing of the boy's fugitive pieces which issued from the press of a Horsham printer named Phillips. Sir Bysshe died on January 6, 1815, and was buried at Horsham.



partiality for the author will prevent him from thinking you infallible in things that regarded his mental powers :— "Hubert" I have told you of. Southey regrets our going. The Calverts were much against it ; nay, all of them violently, except Mrs. C[alvert], who wishes us success heartily. We *shall* have success : I am perfectly confident of the impossibility of failure. Let your pure spirit animate our proceedings. Oh that you were with us. You have said you are not handsome, but, though the sleekness of your skin, the symmetry of your form, might not attract the courtiers of Dublin Castle, yet that tongue of energy, and that eye of fire, would awe them into native insignificance, and command the conviction of those whose hearts vibrate in unison with justice and benevolence.—Dinner surprised me in the midst of my letter. I have since seen yours to Harriet. Oh my dearest friend, do not suffer the little ingratitude of one of the vipers of the world to sting you too severely. *Do not feel.*—Yes, do feel, that I may feel with you ; that every vibration of your nerves may be assimilated to mine, mine to yours. Dare all !—You have mistaken Harriet : she is not pregnant. It was a piece of good fortune which I could not expect. I can truly imagine your hopes and feelings concerning the possibility of this circumstance. I hope to have a large family of children : It will bind *you* and me closer, and Harriet. I, who believe in the omnipotence of education, have no fears for their eventual well-being.

Harriet has filled up most of this letter, whilst I have been writing to the Captain. Do not consider this as a *letter* : I owe you one now. You shall have full payment.

I am now, as Harriet can tell you, quite recovered from the little nervous attack I mentioned. Do not alarm yourself either about murderers, spies, government, prisons, or nerves. I must, as I said, have hopes, and those very confident ones, from *you*, to fill the sails of our packet to Dublin.

The post-woman waits ; and therefore, my dearest

friend, I bid you adieu. Happiness and hope attend my dearest friend until we meet at the Post-office, Dublin!

Yours P. B. S.

I have made a strong, though vulgar appeal to the feelings of the postmaster, as to my veracity about the single sheet.<sup>1</sup>

[Written by Harriet]

MY DEAR MADAM,

Your letter has given me great pain, when I think that one so amiable should be made the sport of an unfeeling and prejudiced woman. I had loved this Anne, for I thought her amiable and sensible: but how often are we deceived in children; you are unhappy my dear friend about her; and what can we do to restore your felicity? Would that you were here! How do I every day hate the foolish customs of society that shackle all our projects! You beg me to pardon you for committing a very slight error, it is now your turn to pardon me. I have sent you a letter<sup>2</sup> which I am afraid will add to your melancholy: yet it is true what I have said, and now I am quite angry that I sent it, yet I was afraid you might hear the circumstance much more dreadful than it really was;] but do not, my dear Madam, suffer yourself to be alarmed at it; for now all is quiet and tranquil, nor do we expect any more alarms, and if we have, which is not at all likely, we are well guarded.—I hope you will not let it prey upon you, but endeavour to forget it as soon as read, and indeed if you have not read it before you receive this, let me beg of you to burn it unopened.

Percy is writing to Captain Pilfold: he means to put him right in respect to what my aunt has told him. He has therefore made me fill up this large sheet. I wish he had done it himself, as to a certainty it would be much

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<sup>1</sup> See the direction of this letter, p. 239.

<sup>2</sup> This is the lost letter alluded to above by Shelley.

more entertaining than this. He is much better than he has been for some time ; and I hope as he gets stronger, he will outgrow his nervous complaints. Next week we think of going to Ireland : therefore you had better direct your next letter to the Post Office, Dublin. I need not tell [you] I wish we were there ; tho' I have never been on the sea, therefore I do not know what an effect it may have upon me, tho' now I can bear the journey better than if I were you know what ; which I do not expect will be the case for some time, years perhaps. But now adieu to that subject.—I am reading a new thing written after the Revolution ; but there are none of the great characters mentioned, therefore I am quite disappointed. Southey has lent them to us. I shall write again to-morrow as I have a great deal to say. In the meantime believe me

Your most affectionate sincere friend,

H. S.

[Addressed outside],

Single sheet, by God

Miss HITCHENER,

Hurstpierpoint,

Brighton, Sussex.

[Postmark], Jan. 28.

# 118. TO WILLIAM GODWIN

(London)

KESWICK, CUMBERLAND,

[Postmark], January 28, 1812.

MY DEAR SIR,

Your letter has reached me on the eve of our departure for Dublin. I cannot deny myself the pleasure of answering it, although we shall probably have reached Ireland before an answer to this can arrive. You do us a great and essential service by the enclosed introduction to Mr. Curran<sup>1</sup> ;

<sup>1</sup> John Philpot Curran (1750-1817), the Irish orator, who, at the date of Shelley's visit to Ireland, was Master of the Rolls. He defended Archibald Hamilton Rowan in 1792, as well as the patriots of the Irish Rebellion of 1798, and was strongly opposed to the

he is a man whose public character I have admired and respected. You offer an additional motive for hastening our journey. I have not long been married. My wife is the partner of my thoughts and feelings. My state at the period of our first knowledge of each other was isolated and friendless; *hers* was embittered by family disagreements and a system of domestic oppressions. We agreed to unite our fates, and the reasons that operated to induce our submission to the ceremonies of the Church were the many advantages of benefiting society which the despotism of custom would cut us off from in case of our nonconformity. My peculiar reasons were considerations of the unequally weighty burden of disgrace and hatred which a resistance to this system would entail upon my companion. A man, in such a case, is a man of gallantry and spirit—a woman loses all claim to respect and politeness. She has lost modesty, which is the female criterion of virtue, and those whose virtues extend no farther than modesty regard her with hatred and contempt.

You regard early authorship [as] detrimental to the cause of general happiness. I confess this has not been my opinion, even when I have bestowed deep, and I hope, disinterested thought upon the subject.

If any man would determine, sincerely and cautiously, at *every* period of his life, to publish books which should contain the real state of his feelings and opinions, I am willing to suppose that this portraiture of his mind would be worth many metaphysical disquisitions; and one, whose mind is strongly imbued with an ardent desire of communicating pleasurable sensations, is of all others the least

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Union. His daughter Sarah, who was deeply in love with the hapless Robert Emmet, did not long survive his execution. With such a record, and with his sympathy for the wrongs of his Catholic countrymen, it is not surprising that Godwin looked to Curran to befriend Shelley. In later years, when Shelley was in Italy, he became acquainted with Curran's daughter Amelia, who was living at Rome. It was she who painted the familiar portrait of Shelley now in the National Portrait Gallery, London.



likely to publish any feelings or opinions, but such as should excite the reader to discipline in some sort his mind into the same state as that of the writer.

With these sentiments, I have been preparing an address to the Catholics of Ireland, which, however deficient may be its execution, I can by no means admit that it contains one sentiment which *can* harm the cause of liberty and happiness. It consists of the benevolent and tolerant deductions of philosophy reduced into the simplest language, and such as those who by their uneducated poverty are most susceptible of evil impressions from Catholicism may clearly comprehend. I know it can do no harm ; it cannot excite rebellion, as its main principle is to trust the success of a cause to the energy of its truth. It cannot " widen the breach between the kingdoms," as it attempts to convey to the vulgar mind sentiments of universal philanthropy, and whatever impressions it may produce, they can be no others but those of peace and harmony ; it owns no religion but benevolence, no cause but virtue, no party but the world. I shall devote myself with unremitting zeal, as far as an uncertain state of health will permit, towards forwarding the great ends of virtue and happiness in Ireland, regarding as I do the present state of that country's affairs as an opportunity which if I, being thus disengaged, permit to pass unoccupied, I am unworthy of the character which I have assumed. Enough of Ireland !

[ I anticipated in my own mind your sentiments on the remark which you quoted from my last letter concerning my father. I am not a stranger to the immense complexity of human feelings, but when I find generosity so exceedingly outweighed in any one's conduct by the contrary, and less extended principle, then I despair of good fruits, seeing marks of barrenness. I have a great wish of adding to my father's happiness, because the filial connection seems to render it, as it were, more particularly in my power ; but it is impossible. A little time since, he sent to me a letter, through his attorney, renewing an allowance of two hundred

pounds per annum, but with this remark, "that his sole reason for so doing was to prevent my cheating strangers." The insult contained in these words, as applied to me, excites no feelings of repulsion or hatred towards him, but it makes me despair of conciliation when I see how rooted is his prejudice against me.

I find myself near the end of my paper. My egotism appears inexhaustible. My relation of pupilage with regard to you in a manner excuses this apparent vanity. I wish to put you in possession of as much of my thoughts and feelings as I know myself. I shall regard as a most inestimable blessing my happy audacity in casting aside the trammels of custom, and drinking the streams of *your* mind at their fountain-head.

I will say no more of *Wales* at present. We have determined next summer to receive a most dear friend,<sup>1</sup> of whom I shall speak hereafter, in some romantic spot. Perhaps I shall be able to prevail on you and your wife and children to leave the tumult and dust of London for a while. However that may be, I shall certainly see you in London. I am not yet of age. At that time, I have great hopes of being enabled to offer you a house of my own. Philanthropy is confined to no spot.—Adieu!

Direct your next—"Post Office, Dublin."

My wife sends her respects.

Believe me, in all sincerity of heart, yours truly, sincerely,

P. B. SHELLEY.

To Mr. WILLIAM GODWIN, London.

### 119. TO ELIZABETH HITCHENER

(Hurstpierpoint)

[GRETA BANK,] KESWICK [CUMBERLAND],

[January 29, 1812.]

On Monday we depart for Ireland. This is probably the last letter you will receive from Keswick. We are

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<sup>1</sup> Elizabeth Hitchener.

staying at Calvert's, and our £100 has arrived. Prospects appear fair; but I have learned to doubt of the result of all human enterprises, whilst my language and my countenance express the confidence of enthusiasm, and my heart rebels against the dismal suggestions of possible evil.

I do not ask you *wherefore* you are unhappy my dearest friend, because I sympathize with every feeling which the unkindness of ingratitude excites in you, but I tell you to subdue it, for *our* sakes, and for the sake of that world to which I will suppose that you are destined to be an ornament and a glory.—Your present state is isolated and friendless; even worse, daily ingratitude and unexpected duplicity cut you to the heart. You suffer the severities of ill fortune, and all the dreary intercourse of daily life is unmingled by consolation, save the infrequent post-days. And what can letters do? They can becalm the soul, but not all day, they can tell you that you are beloved; can prove to you that *I am yours*; but this only at intervals. With what bitter force will ingratitude and duplicity recur. This is more than duty demands: for a devotement like yours some recompense is to be expected. I will find one for you—tho' here a corner of self comes in.—Come and live with us. You are not one to start at this. What will the world say? What they please, precisely. Those who know anything of our public and private character will believe any scandal as soon as Sir F. Burdett's friends would give credit to the story of his keeping *five* mistresses in Tottenham Court Road. This is one of the *Morning Post* stories. Nor will the world's whispers affect our usefulness. In what manner? Who will credit that, when I made a Scotch marriage with a woman who is handsome, that any criminality, of the nature of infidelity, can be attached to me? Who will believe, when they read our publications, but that our conduct is in *some degree* regulated by such impressions, and repeated endeavours to counteract general demoralization? And supposing



after all that they *did* believe this, are we answerable for their silly notions? Is our usefulness and happiness, which latter must in some degree conduce to the former, to be sacrificed to opinion? Is expediency to be the rule of our conduct? Ought minds unisonous in reason and feeling to be separated by the inferences which others may draw from their conduct? Let us attempt to form this Paradise, and defy the destroyers. Calm consistent reasoning will defeat the most terrible. Besides, you *may* be eminently useful: the union of our minds will be much more efficacious than a state of separate endeavour.—I shall excite you to action, you will excite me to just speculation. We should mutually correct each other's weaknesses, and confirm our powers. Harriet, Eliza, and Percy, all join to entreat that you will *attempt* to come . . . to consider the point without having decided against us previously. How extensive might not be your usefulness, how improved and confirmed your speculations of justness! What admirable and excellent greatness might you not add to the grandeur and firmness of your present character—And I! how firm and collected should *I* not become. I should possibly gain the advantage in the exchange of qualities, but *my* powers are such as would augment yours.—I perceive in you the embryo of a mighty intellect which may one day enlighten thousands. How desirous ought I not to be, if I conceive that one spark which glimmers through mine should kindle a blaze by which nations may rejoice. . . Am I not earnest that you should come?—but consider this point. We have enough money for all of us. There is no doubt but that you could do more good with us than at Hurst. Explain your plan to your father: tell him that your considerations of usefulness lead you to join yourself with us. I will not insult your confidence by supposing that you can fear [but] that you will be independent amongst us. Whenever you come, you have nothing to do but to throw yourself into the mail, and when you come at the end of your journey, I



shall be waiting for you. In the summer we *shall* see you. Can you make up your mind never to leave us? How consummate *then* might not our publications be, how directed by the close analysis of reasoning, how animated by the emanations of your warmer heart! Have you no money? Write and say so. If not we can easily spare some: we shall have superfluity in Dublin.—Will you well consider this? Oh, my dearest friend, when I think of the uncertainty and transitoriness of human life and its occupations, when I consider its fleeting prospects and its fluctuating principles, how desirous am I to crowd into its sphere as much usefulness as possible.—We have but a certain time allotted us in which to do its business: how much does it become us to improve and multiply this time; and to regard every hour neglected, mis-spent, or unimproved, as so much lost to the cause of virtue, liberty, and happiness. I hope to be compelled to [have] recourse to laudanum no more. My health is re-established, and I am now strong in hope and nerve. Your hopes must go with us: I must have no horrible forebodings. Everybody is not killed that goes to Dublin. Perhaps many are now on the road for the very same purpose as that which we propose. As to what you say of the Duke of Norfolk, it is quite unfounded. The D[uke] is a deist. The Duke is far from the best of the English noblemen: he is not a moral man, but certainly is not attached to Catholicism. He desires and votes for Reform, tho' he has not virtue enough to begin it in his own person. He is in every respect a character of mediocrity, depend upon it, *I* have nothing to fear either from him or his emissaries. The Duke is as [little] my friend as he is yours—he merely desires to gratify his own family, his own borough-interest.—“Passive virtue is ” *not* “your sphere of action:” most active you ought to be. Come, come to Ireland. Arrange your affairs, give up school, it is a noble field. Energies like yours ought to be unconfined. Write for what money you want. You do not fear the journey;

the hatred of the world is despicable to you. Come, come, and share with us the noblest success, or the most glorious martyrdom. Here is an appeal to the feelings of a noble mind. I ought to be ashamed of myself. Consider merely the considerations of usefulness, and put out of the question all foolish rant of persuasion. Yet come: it is right that you should come. Assert your freedom—the freedom of truth and nature.

You will hear from me again. Adieu, my dearest friend. I shall write, before we leave K[eswick], again.

Yours

*[Written by Harriet]*

Why is my dear friend unhappy, and why are you not with us? Why will you suffer the opinion of the world to keep you from us, and to make yourself unhappy; would it not be better to leave the world to itself, and come and be happy whilst it is in your power? Remember life is short. What shall I say to bring you to us? Is there nothing we can urge to shake you? Why are we separated? Should we not be more useful all together? You would, by your arguments, countenance ours: as you are older than I am, therefore people would not think what I say so foolish. Then why will you not join us? I am well convinced that, if you were in Ireland, you might do as much good as Percy. Indeed I am hurt at the idea of your being unhappy: and why would you be the slave of a world that has persecuted you, and which continues to wound you in every way it can? O my friend, what I say may have no weight. I know I am much younger than yourself, and that your judgment is much superior to mine. You have seen more of the world than myself, yet, if you knew how ardent we are to have you near us, I am sure you would comply. I cannot wait till the summer: you must come to us in Ireland. I am Irish: I claim kinship with them. I have done with the English: I have witnessed too much

of John Bull, and I am ashamed of him.<sup>1</sup> Till I am disappointed in the brothers and sisters of my affection, I will claim kindred with those brave sons of the ocean; and when I am deceived in them, it will be enough. I have never told you of my sister, 'tis well: words can never sufficiently express her kindness and goodness to me. She is my more than mother. What do I not owe to her gentle care? Everything. When you see her you will form your judgment of her. I did think before I was acquainted with you, that she was the best and most superior woman in the world. I do not say I have changed my opinion: that remains fixed. I have only so far changed it as to think there are some like her; but, as to being better, that I cannot think. She begs me to tell you that she is no lover of forms and ceremonies. She has long loved and admired you my dear friend: so do not call her "Miss Westbrook." She is your sister, and mine. How oft have I blessed that Providence who has given me such a treasure. Did you but know her as I do, you would not wonder at my love for her, her amiable qualities gain her friends in all who have the happiness of knowing her. But I will say no more, as I am unable to do her justice. I know not if you have bad weather in Sussex. Here it is so uncertain you never know if the morrow will be fine; all this week has been very stormy, and last night and to-day it has never ceased. We are spending the last week with our amiable friends [the] Calverts. We are so much indebted to them, they have been extremely kind and attentive. She is a most amiable woman, and I wish you were here to see her. She saw us reading your last letter, at which she was very much surprised, the length was so uncommon. You will think of us next Monday night: then we set sail. 'Twill be either pleasure or not: I suspect we shall be very sick. We will write from the

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<sup>1</sup> Harriet Shelley meant to imply that she was Irish in her sympathies. See her letter to Miss Nugent of April 16, 1812, p. 294.

Isle of Man, if you do not hear from us before. There seems to be sad work in Ireland ; but I hope Percy will escape all prosecutions. I hope we shall hear from you again soon. When we do not hear from you it is quite a blank.

I must now say adieu. I hope you will put the most favourable constructions on what we have said. Keep up your spirits, and believe me ever

Your sincere, affectionate friend,

H. S.

[Addressed outside],  
single sheet,

Miss HITCHENER,  
Hurstpierpoint,  
Brighton, Sussex.

Jan. 29 [Postmark], Feb. 1, 1812.

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## V.—SHELLEY'S IRISH CAMPAIGN

February 3—March 20, 1812

THE Shelleys at Whitehaven—Southey and Mrs. Calvert—The Shelleys' arrival at Dublin—Lines from "Queen Mab"—Verses on The Mexican Revolution and "To Ireland"—Tom Paine's works—Hamilton Rowan—"Proposals for an Association"—The Dublin poor—John Lawless—Shelley's speech—Harriet's school-days—"Declaration of Rights"—Catherine Nugent—Shelley and Lawless' History of "Ireland"—The Irish campaign abandoned.

### 120. TO ELIZABETH HITCHENER

(Hurstpierpoint).

[WHITEHAVEN,<sup>1</sup>

February 3, 1812.]

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

We are now at Whitehaven—which is a miserable manufacturing sea-port Town. I write to you a short letter to inform you of our safety, and that the wind which will fill the sails of our packet to-night is favourable and fresh.—Certainly it is laden with some of your benedictions, or with the breath of the disembodied virtuous who smile upon our attempt. We set off to-night at twelve o'clock, and arrive at the Isle of Man, whence you will hear from us to-morrow morning; thence we proceed, when the wind serves, to Dublin. We may be detained some days in the Island; if the weather is fine, we shall not regret it, at all events we shall escape this filthy town and horrible inn.—Now do you not think of us with other feelings than those of hope and confidence. I know that belief is not a voluntary action of the mind, but I think

<sup>1</sup> Shelley, his wife and Eliza Westbrook probably left Keswick on Sunday, February 2nd.

your confidence would not be groundless. To give you an idea of the perfect fearlessness with which Harriet and Eliza accompany my attempt, they think of no inconveniences but those of a wet night and sea-sickness, which in fact we find to be the only real ones. Assassination, either by private or public menace, appear[s] to me to be the phantom of a mind whose affectionate friendship has outran the real state of the case. Assure yourself that such things are now superannuated and unfeasible. Give me as I have before said, the confidence of your hope, the sanguineness of your certainty, joined to that concern for welfare which we mutually felt. For my friend wrong me not by thinking that, in this bustle of present events, and enthusiastic anticipation of future, you are forgotten or unheeded, or lightly remembered. No, *your* coöperation and presence is wanting to perfect the present, and with the certainty of hope do I conceive of you in the future as a friend, and dear friend, who will form the foreground of the future which my fancy designs. We felt regret at leaving Keswick. I passed Southey's house without *one* sting. He is a man who *may* be amiable in his *private* character, stained and false as is his public one, he *may* be amiable ; but, if he is, my feelings are liars, and I have been so long accustomed to trust to them in these cases, that the opinion of the world is not the likeliest criminator to impeach their credibility. But we left the Calverts. I hope some day to show you *Mrs.* Calvert ; I shall not forget her, but will preserve her memory as another flower to compose a garland which I intend to present to *you*.—Assure yourself that it is a fragrant one ; that if it breathes *not* of heaven, I am an impostor, and a silly gardener that picks weeds where roses grow. I confess that I cannot expect you will come to us *now*. If you *do*, if you do, it will be a piece of good fortune for which my mind will be unprepared, but which it will hail with more delight than the magi did “ the day-spring from on high.”—But in the summer, when you come to us,—if you depart I shall say

you are "the deaf adder that stoppeth her ears, and hearkeneth not to the voice of the charmer." I stop the wheels of the former sentence for a minute, just to say that I do not even *allegorize* myself by the "charmer." I entreat you, do not allow the ingratitude of that little viper Anne to disturb you—nor think it anything like an appearance of *original sin*. I do not tell you, by the former, to staunch the beating arteries of your heart of sensibility—turn the channel to some better and some greater object—"the welfare of general man," even sympathize with me in Dublin. Of the latter, I will give you a reason hereafter, indeed I believe that I have given you many already.—Well, adieu. Harriet and Eliza in excellent spirits, bid you an affectionate adieu.—Pray, what are you to be *called* when you come to us? for Eliza's name is Eliza, and Miss Hitchener is too long, too broad, and too deep.—Adieu.

Yours

P. B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],  
Miss HITCHENER,  
Hurstpierpoint, Sussex.  
[Postmark], Feb. 6, 1812.

## 121. TO ELIZABETH HITCHENER

DUBLIN,

February 13, 1812.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

Last night we arrived safe in this city. It was useless to have written to you before. Now I have only time for a line to tell you of our safety. We were driven by a storm quite to the north of Ireland, and yesterday was the end of our journey thence.—Expect to hear more; all is well.

Your affectionate

P. B. SHELLEY.

[Written by Harriet]

I have no time :—the day after to-morrow. Direct to us—

Mr. DUNN'S,  
No. 7 SACKVILLE STREET,  
DUBLIN.

Write soon.

[Addressed outside],  
Miss HITCHENER,  
Hurstpierpoint,  
Sussex, England.  
[Postmark], Feb. 16, 1812.

122. TO ELIZABETH HITCHENER  
(Hurstpierpoint)

DUBLIN,  
7 SACKVILLE STREET,  
February 14, 1812.

Mr. DUNN'S, Woollen Draper.

At length I can write to you. I have been anxiously desirous to put matters in train for my enterprise, this has engaged me. How eagerly do I fly to you! My dearest friend, think not that you were forgotten yesterday: you were the boldest foreground in the picture of my fancy.—I have read all your letters. They came at breakfast yesterday, after I had sent my hasty guarantee of our safety.—Now I have read them. What feelings have they excited! The words *gratitude*, *sympathy*, and *hope*, are surely too unimpassioned to express them. At length however you are free from anxiety for our safety, as *here* we have nothing to apprehend but Government, which will not, assure yourself, *dare* to be so barefacedly oppressive as to attack my "Address": it will breathe the spirit of peace, toleration, and patience. In short, in a few posts it will be sent to you.—I shall continue to write to you as freely as from Keswick: whether our letters be inspected or not I cannot tell. If they are, this I know—that



their hatred to me will not thereby become stronger, or their conviction of my *discontentedness* clearer; as my name, which will be prefixed to the "Address," will show that my deeds are not deeds of darkness, nor my counsels those of mystery and fear. Dread nothing for me. The course of my conduct in Ireland (as shall the entire course of my life) shall be marked by openness and sincerity.—The peace and toleration which I recommend can make no *good* men my enemies: I should blush to call a *bad* man my friend.—Your letter, my friend, has added energy to my hopes, tenfold activity to my exertions here. We will meet you in Wales, *and never part again*. You shall not cross the Channel alone: it will not do. In compliance with Harriet's earnest solicitations, I entreated you instantly to come and join our circle; to resign your school, all, everything, for *us* and the Irish cause. This could *not* be done, I now see plainly. Consistently with the duties which you have imposed upon yourself—duties which I ought to have respected—it could not be done. But the warmth of our hearts ran away with the coolness of our heads: forgive the fault of friendship.—But summer will come.

The ocean rolls between us. O thou ocean, whose multitudinous billows ever lash Erin's green isle, on whose shores this venturous arm would plant the flag of liberty, roll on! And with each wave whose echoings die, amid thy melancholy silentness shall die a moment too—one of those moments which part my friend and me! I could stand upon thy shores, O Erin, and could count the billows that, in their unceasing swell, dash on thy beach, and every wave might seem an instrument in Time the giant's grasp to burst the barriers of Eternity. Proceed, thou giant, conquering and to conquer! March on thy lonely way.—The nation fall beneath thy noiseless footstep—pyramids that for millenniums have defied the blast, and laughed at lightnings, thou dost crush to nought. Yon monarch in his solitary pomp is but the fungus of a winter day that

thy light footstep presses into dust. Thou art a conqueror, Time! All things give way before thee, but "the fixed and virtuous will," the sacred sympathy of soul which was when thou wert not, which *shall be* when thou perishest.<sup>1</sup>

Summer will come, and with it thou, more welcome than its genial breeze, more welcome than the long lightsome day when the *sophistication* of candle-light is almost dispensed with, when we quit the woe and pride that mars the city's peace, and seek the rarer instances of human misery and vice which relieve the contemplation in the country.—Dearest friend, come to us all—at midsummer, never to part again.—Lose in our little circle the taunts of the unthinking, the pride of the worldling, the lowliness<sup>2</sup> of grandeur. Come: for the severe virtue that has guided thee thus far points out *now* a path whereon friendship has scattered flowers. Nothing shall prevent our eternal union in the summer. I ought to count myself a favoured mortal, with such a wife and friend (these human names and distinctions perhaps are necessary in the present state of society). You see I look forward to the period in which pain and evil, the consequences or concomitants of selfish passion, shall cease. Now as to the means. Your dear little Americans may come and live with us. (*Suppose there was a little stranger to play with them*: this is, however, a hope which I do not anticipate but at some distance.) It appears to me that a plain representation of your views and motives to your father, told in all their energetic simplicity of singleness, would best reconcile him to your Welsh plan. Would he call it visionary,—all very well in theory, but impracticable, and useless were it practicable? Is he one who makes a distinction between the profession of certain principles, and acting up to that profession? If he is, then he is a man unworthy of my high-souled friend. He would then deserve

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<sup>1</sup> Some of the lines in this paragraph appeared as verse, with variations of text, in section IX of "Queen Mab."

<sup>2</sup> Perhaps Shelley meant to write "loneliness."

not the unexampled sacrifice of her devotion, a sacrifice of what might thrill millions with feelings of virtue, and breathe a soul into the corpse of a nation. For much do I expect from you: to whom much is given, from these much is expected. Nature, God, or Chance, has given you talents which have risen above the disadvantages of indigence and low birth, which are to you topics of glory incommunicable to me—and (a paraphrase on the narrowness that marked Nelson's dying hour) "The world expects every being to do its duty."—But your father is not this man—he is not hardened to the perception of truth; his eyelids are not sealed to its emanations. He will approve of your coming. Shortly perhaps he will behold the glorious fruits of a tree the natural scion of his own, and, so far as depends on himself, I hope a moral one. As to money, after that period you need demand none from him. £400 per an.<sup>1</sup> will be quite enough for us all: our publications would supply the deficiency. Well do I know that economy is the greatest generosity; and altho' we cannot practise it so strictly in Dublin as I could wish. This will, however, be but short. Have you heard [that] a new republic is set up in Mexico? I have just written the following short tribute to its success.<sup>2</sup>

## I

Brothers! between you and me,  
 Whirlwinds sweep and billows roar:  
 Yet in spirit oft I see  
 On thy wild and winding shore  
 Freedom's bloodless banners wave,  
 Feel the pulses of the brave  
 Unextinguished in the grave—  
 See them drenched in sacred gore,  
 Catch the warrior's gasping breath  
 Murmuring "Liberty or death."

<sup>1</sup> Besides the £200 a year from Shelley's father, Mr. Westbrook contributed a similar sum. (See p. 199.)

<sup>2</sup> This poem appears in the MS. volume of Shelley's early poems, in the possession of Shelley's grandson, Mr. Esdaile, with additional stanzas and the title "To the Republicans of North America." The title of the lines following is supplied by Prof. Dowden in his edition of Shelley's poems (Macmillan & Co., 1890), *q.v.*

## II

Shout aloud ! Let every slave,  
 Crouching at Corruption's throne,  
 Start unto a man, and brave  
     Racks and chains without a groan :  
 And the castle's heartless glow,  
 And the hovel's vice and woe,  
 Fade like gaudy flowers that blow—  
     Weeds that peep, and then are gone ;  
 Whilst, from misery's ashes risen,  
 Love shall burst the Captive's prison.

## III

Cotopaxi ! bid the sound  
     Through thy sister-mountains ring,  
 Till each valley smile around  
     At the blissful welcoming !  
 And O thou stern Ocean deep,  
 Thou whose foamy billows sweep  
 Shores where thousands wake to weep  
     Whilst they curse a villain king,  
 On the winds that fan thy breast  
 Bear thou news of Freedom's rest !

## IV

Ere the day-star dawn of love,  
     Where the flag of war unfurled  
 Floats with crimson stain above  
     The fabric of a ruined world—  
 Never ! but to vengeance driven  
 When the patriot's spirit shriven  
 Seeks in death its native heaven !  
     There, to desolation hurled,  
 Widowed love may watch thy bier,  
 Balm thee with its dying tear.

## [To Ireland]

Bear witness, Erin, when thine injured isle  
 Sees summer on its verdant pastures smile,  
 Its cornfields waving in the winds that sweep  
 The billowy surface of thy circling deep,—  
 Thou tree whose shadow o'er the Atlantic gave  
 Peace, wealth, and beauty, to its friendly wave.  
                                     its blossoms fade,  
 And blighted are the leaves that cast its shade,  
 Whilst the cold hand gathers its scanty fruit,  
 Whose chillness struck a canker to its root.



These are merely sent as lineaments in the picture of my mind. On these topics I find that I sometimes can write poetry when I feel—such as it is.

Do I not know, my friend, what you feel for the sacred cause of truth and liberty? Am I not assured of your devotedness to virtue? Do I doubt the pleasure with which you would offer yourself a sacrifice? No, never! Do not encourage within yourself such a supposition, even whilst you form in your mind a disavowal of its reality. I believe in you; and, when I say that I believe in you, I mean with all my heart, with all my soul, and with all my strength. Well—my "Address" will soon come out. It will be instantly followed by another,<sup>1</sup> with downright proposals for instituting associations for bettering the condition of human-kind. I—even I, weak, young, poor, as I am—will attempt to organize them, the society of peace and love. Oh! that I *may* be a successful apostle of this only true religion, the religion of Philanthropy.—At all events, I *will* have a Debating Society, and see what will grow out of that. This is the crisis for the attempt. Have you heard of the Mexico affair? You *cannot* be vain. Attempt it for my sake: attempt it, and you will come to have a right idea of your own powers. The most useful death that I can conceive of, as happening to you, must be far *less* beneficial to mankind than an existence of but a year, such as yours will be. Do not think I have set up the trade of prophesying, but I can deduce moral effects from moral causes. In a few days I shall have more, much more, to tell you. Godwin has introduced me to Mr. Curran. I took the letter

<sup>1</sup> Shelley's second Irish pamphlet entitled "Proposals / for an / association / of those / Philanthropists, / who convinced of the inadequacy of the / moral and political state of Ireland to / produce benefits which are nevertheless / attainable are willing to unite to accomplish its regeneration. / By / Percy Bysshe Shelley. / Dublin : / Printed by J. Eton, Winetavern Street." The tract was published on Monday, March 2nd, 1812, if Shelley carried out his intention as expressed in his letter to Miss Hitchener of February 27, 1812.

this morning : he was not at home.<sup>1</sup> I shall see him soon. I have not seen Flower's book.<sup>2</sup> I have that on the Organic Remains to read with you. You have not seen Tom Paine's works. Eliza is going to employ herself in collecting the useful passages, which we shall publish. She is now making a red cloak, which will be finished before dinner. Now, my dearest friend, you will remember me, as I remember [you]. The thought of your approbation is to me more exhilarating than the applause of thousands. You animate me. I wish this letter now had reached you. Do not fear postmasters. Harriet sends her love : Eliza longs to see you.

Believe me

Your

PERCY SHELLEY.

[Written by Harriet]

MY DEAR SISTER,

I have not yet answered your kind letters, but depend upon it I shall very soon : they are not lost upon me. Suppose you in the meantime believe me your affectionate friend and sister H. S.

[Addressed outside],  
single [sheet],

Miss HITCHENER,  
Hurstpierpoint,  
Brighton, Sussex,  
England.

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<sup>1</sup> Curran was then living on the south side of St. Stephen's Green, at a house that was subsequently occupied by Sir Benjamin Guinness (the restorer of St. Patrick's Cathedral), "who erected shortly before his death the new and imposing front and portico to his house by which it is now easily recognised."—D. F. MacCarthy's "Shelley's Early Life," p. 148.

<sup>2</sup> Evidently Benjamin Flower (1755–1829), a political writer. He was imprisoned for a libel on Bishop Watson in 1799, and edited *The Cambridge Intelligencer* and *The Political Register*, 1807–1811. It is not clear what book is referred to by Shelley.

## 123. TO ELIZABETH HITCHENER

(Hurstpierpoint)

[7 LOWER SACKVILLE ST.,<sup>1</sup>

DUBLIN,

20 February, 1812 ?]

I send you the first sheet of my first "Address" as it comes out. The style of this, as you will perceive, is adapted to the lowest comprehension that can read. It will be followed by another in my own natural style though in the same strain. This one will make about 30 such pages as the enclosed: the other as much. Expect to hear soon. Happiness be with you.

My dear friend,

Yours.

[Addressed outside],

[Franked by] DUKE OF NORFOLK.

Miss HITCHENER,

Hurstpierpoint,

Brighton, Sussex, England.

Contains a letter.<sup>(2)</sup>

## 124. TO ELIZABETH HITCHENER

[DUBLIN,

February 24, 1812 ?]

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

Your letter dated 19 [February] reached me this morning. —It is with pain that I find that ten days must

<sup>1</sup> This note is written on the sheet of the *Correspondent* newspaper, which contains the substance of Mr. Parnell's speech in the House of Commons on Catholic Emancipation. The sheet is evidently the wrapper which came from the printer, and is directed on one of the margins, "Mr. Percy Shelley." Another sheet of the *Correspondent* preserved among the Hitchener correspondence bears the date of "Friday, March 12, 1812," on the margin of which Shelley has scrawled some rough sketches; one has the appearance of a man snatching a dart from a figure of death. The cover bearing the frank has been pasted on to the newspaper.

<sup>(2)</sup> This is written by the postmaster.

intervene between our question and answer. Things go on in Ireland as you shall hear. I have much food for interest and occupation of mind in the events of each day. Yet I earnestly desire your society, and will not be satisfied until I am convinced that it is to be ours irretrievably; that no considerations will deprive us of it. Impelled as I am by the conviction, powerful and resistless, that the general good would be best promoted by our united efforts, it is not without pain that I should see this important benefit sacrificed to a vague feeling, undescribable, and indefinite even in the mind wherein alone it lives. Those feelings ought to be checked, in a noble and virtuous mind, which have not for their basis the immutable relations of the universe.—I can plainly see that “your desire to procure your own subsistence” is a mixture of a strong perception of the necessity of usefulness; and some portion of this undefined feeling, which is the result of certain prejudices respecting *money, lodging, clothes*, etc., which, combined in an infinite variety of modifications, have entered your mind so artfully as to gain reception, where had their unworthiness been known, they would not have been admitted. Usefulness is your end and aim. It is the cement of our attachment, it is the spirit of our life. We have a certain object to attain, and a given time in which to attain it. It is fit that all our actions tend to this ultimate.—What is usefulness? How is it best attained? True independence is necessary, but because the chance and circumstance of birth has placed in another the power of having a house, a table, a set of chairs, some beds and other accommodations, are you *dependent* on that person by accepting them?—You have a right to them. Eliza keeps our common stock of money, for safety, in some hole or corner of her dress; but we are not all dependent on her, altho’ she gives it out as we want it.—You will *not* be dependent on any one by coming to us.—If dependence would exist anywhere, we should depend on *you*, during your continuance amongst us, for happiness



and associated intellect. Let us leave to the grovelling sons of commerce and aristocracy that selfish gratitude (if this name is not polluted by the application) which calls participation of power (for money is power) a favor. By living with us, altho' you gained none of this power, you would earn by your usefulness more wages than I, were I the treasurer of an Empire, could discharge. As self-constituted steward of universal happiness, I could never repay you.—My dearest friend, these are vain distinctions; believe me that they are. Let us in the great pursuit in which we are engaged, consider ourselves as little as possible in the light of individuals who have separate interests to gratify, and separate ends to answer.—Do not think it necessary to the great ends of our being that persons whose pursuits are disinterested, and who love each other, must, to preserve the genuine condition of their nature, live three hundred miles apart, and make money; altho' if they were together, they might occupy a house in which there would be chairs, tables, beds, glasses, plates, and food, enough for them all. For what are all these . . . obligations? Now it comes home. You cannot resist the ludicrousness and unworthiness of physical obligations between you and I. The moral obligations that are between us I admit and own. The gratitude, or the high mental yearning, that I feel annexed with the idea of your identity I own: with pride and pleasure I own it. You think too meanly of yourself, too highly of me. At all events, our spirits unite in one object. Why will you thus separate us by a distinction trifling as it is worldly, and whose very inconsequence is proved by the value which the children of fashion and folly set upon it? You may not when among us procure your own subsistence:—how much nobler a task to procure the happiness of those who love you, *even* if this were all. Besides your writings, which, if they do not bring money, will at all events be *useful*. I am too, now, incapable of writing, compared to what I shall be when I personally

am enlightened with the emanations of your genius, and invigorated by the deductions of your reason.—“Desire never fails to generate capacity.”—Oh throw aside this prejudice. You do not doubt my friendship, I do not doubt yours. Let us mingle our identities inseparably, and burst upon tyrants with the accumulated impetuosity of our acquirements and resolutions. I am eager, firm, convinced. What I have met with here you will find in my other letter. Friend of my soul, adieu. It is with the united force of all our opinions that I attack this *subsisting* scheme of yours. I proceed in the next sheet after I have been to the printer's.<sup>1</sup>

## 125. TO WILLIAM GODWIN

(London)

[7 LOWER SACKVILLE STREET,] DUBLIN,

Feb[ruary] 24, 1812.

MY DEAR SIR,

A most tedious journey by sea and land has brought us to our destination. I have delayed a few days informing you of it, because I enclose with this a little pamphlet,<sup>2</sup> which I have just printed, and thereby save a double expense. I have wilfully vulgarized the language of this pamphlet, in order to reduce the remarks it contains to the taste and comprehension of the Irish peasantry, who have been too

<sup>1</sup> This intention, it appears, remained unfulfilled.

<sup>2</sup> “The Address to the Irish People,” which Shelley sent through the post as a newspaper. The packet was charged as a letter, and Godwin was made to pay heavily for the mistake. In his reply to Shelley, March 4, 1812, he alludes to his misfortune good-humoredly: “To descend from great things to small, I can perceive that you are already infected with the air of that country. Your letter with its enclosures cost me by post £1 1s. 8d.; and you say in it that ‘you send it in this way to save expense.’ The post always charges parcels that exceed a sheet or two by weight, and they should therefore always be forwarded by some other conveyance.”—Hogg’s “Life of Shelley,” Vol. II, p. 90. Others who suffered by Shelley’s mode of conveying his pamphlet were Mr. Westbrook and Miss Hitchener.

long brutalized by vice and ignorance. I conceive that the benevolent passions of their breasts are in some degree excited, and individual interests in some degree generalized, by Catholic disqualifications and the oppressive influence of the Union Act; that some degree of indignation has arisen at the conduct of the Prince, which might lead to blind insurrections. A crisis like this ought not to be permitted to pass unoccupied or unimproved. I have another pamphlet in the press, earnestly recommending to a different class the institution of a philanthropic society. No *unnatural unanimity* can take place, if secessions of the minority on any question are invariably made. It might segregate into twenty different societies, each coinciding generically, though differing specifically.

We have had a most tedious voyage. We were driven by a storm completely to the North of Ireland, in our passage from the Isle of Man. Harriet (my wife) and Eliza, (my sister-in-law) were very much fatigued, after twenty-eight hours' tossing in a galliot during a violent gale. They are now tolerably recovered. I am exceedingly obliged by your letter of introduction to Mr. Curran. His speeches had interested me before I had any idea of coming to Ireland. It seems that he was the only man who would engage in behalf of the prisoners during the times of horror of the Rebellions. I have called upon him twice, but have not found him at home.

I hope that the motives which induce me to publish thus early in life do not arise from any desire of distinguishing myself any more than is consistent with and subordinate to usefulness. In the first place, my physical constitution is such as will not permit me to hope for a life so long as yours—the person who is constitutionally nervous, and affected by slight fatigue at the age of nineteen, cannot expect firmness and health at fifty. I have therefore resolved to husband whatever powers I may possess, so that they may turn to the best account. I find that whilst my mind is actively engaged in writing or discussion, that it gains



strength at the same time—that the results of its present power are incorporated. I find that subjects grow out of conversation, and that though I begin a subject in writing with no definite view, it presently assumes a definite form, in consequence of the method that grows out of the induced train of thought. I therefore write, and I publish, because I will publish nothing that shall not conduce to virtue, and therefore my publications, so far as they do influence, shall influence to good. My views of society, and my hopes of it, meet with congenial ones in few breasts. But virtue and truth are congenial to many. I will employ no means but these for my object, and however visionary some may regard the ultimatum that I propose, if they act virtuously they will, equally with myself, forward its accomplishment ; and my publications will present to the moralist and metaphysician a picture of a mind, however uncultured and unformed, which had at the dawn of its knowledge taken a singular turn ; and to leave out the early lineaments of its appearance would be to efface those which the attrition of the world had not deprived of right-angled originality. Thus much for egotism.

I am sorry that you cannot come to Wales in the summer. I had pictured to my fancy that I should first meet you in a spot like that in which Fleetwood met Ruffigny<sup>1</sup>; that then every lesson of your wisdom might become associated in my mind with the form of nature where she sports in the simplicity of her loveliness and magnificence, and each become imperishable together. This must not be as yet. I will, however, hope that at some future time the sunset of your evening days may irradiate my soul in scenes like these. I will come to London next autumn. A very dear friend<sup>2</sup> has promised to visit us in Merionethshire in the summer, and I will own that I am not sufficient of a Stoic not to perceive that the grand and ravishing shapes of

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<sup>1</sup> Characters in one of Godwin's novels.

<sup>2</sup> Miss Hitchener.



nature add to the joys of friendship. Besides, you must know that I either *am*, or fancy myself something of a Poet.

You speak of my wife : she desires with me to you, and to all connected with you, her best regards. She is a woman whose pursuits, hopes, fears, and sorrows were so similar to my own, that we married a few months ago. I hope in the course of this year to introduce her to you and yours, as I have introduced myself to you. It is only to those who have had some share in making me what I am that I can be thus free.—Adieu !

You will hear from me shortly. Give my love and respects to every one with whom you are connected. I feel myself almost at your fireside.

Yours very sincerely,

P. B. SHELLEY.

Have they sent you the books ? I send the little book for which I was expelled. I have not changed my sentiments. I know that Milton believed Christianity, but I do not forget that Virgil believed ancient Mythology.

To Mr. W. GODWIN, London.

## 126. TO HAMILTON ROWAN

7 LOWER SACKVILLE STREET, [DUBLIN]

Feb[ruary] 25, 1812.

SIR,

Although I have not the pleasure of being personally known to you, I consider the motives which actuated me in writing the inclosed<sup>1</sup> sufficiently introductory to authorize me in sending you some copies, and waiving ceremonials in a case where public benefit is concerned. Sir, although an Englishman, I feel for Ireland ; and I have left the country in which the chance of birth placed me for the sole

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<sup>1</sup> The copy of the " Address to the Irish People," enclosed with this letter was kept by Rowan to the day of his death at the age of 84, and was seen by Mr. MacCarthy ; it has since disappeared.

purpose of adding my little stock of usefulness to the fund which I hope that Ireland possesses to aid me in the unequal yet sacred combat in which she is engaged. In the course of a few days more I shall print another small pamphlet, which shall be sent to you. I have intentionally vulgarized the language of the inclosed. I have printed 1,500 copies, and am now distributing them throughout Dublin.

Sir, with respect,  
I am your obedient humble servant,  
P. B. SHELLEY.

127. TO ELIZABETH HITCHENER  
(Hurstpierpoint)

7 LOWER SACKVILLE STREET,  
[DUBLIN],  
February 27 [1812].

Do not think that I neglect you. I am actively employed in what should prove to you my attachment.—I am strengthening those indissoluble bonds that bind our friendship. For two days I have omitted writing to you, but each day has been filled up with the employment of disseminating the doctrines of Philanthropy and Freedom : —I have already sent 400 of my little pamphlets into the world, and they have excited a sensation of wonder in Dublin : 1,100 yet remain for distribution. Copies have been sent to sixty public-houses.. No prosecution is yet attempted.—I do not see how it can be. Congratulate me, my friend, for everything proceeds well ; I could not expect more rapid success. The persons with whom I have got acquainted approve of my principles ; and think the truths of the equality of man, the necessity of a reform and the probability of a revolution, undeniable. But they differ from the mode of my enforcing these principles, and hold *expediency* to be necessary in politics, inasmuch

as it is employed in its utmost latitude by the enemies of innovation. I hope to convince them of the contrary of this. To expect that evil will produce good, or falsehood generate truth, is almost as rational as to conceive of a patriot king, or a sincere Lord of the Bedchamber.

My friend, my dearest friend, do you pant to be with us ? If there is any truth in the sympathy of virtuous souls, you do ; for I feel that I desire your presence, and that not merely for the inexpressible gratification of immediate communion, but because you would share with me the high delight of awakening a noble nation from the lethargy of its bondage, and because the resources of your powerful intellect would mature schemes, and organize those of mine which yet are immature,—for expectation is on the tiptoe. I send a man out every day to distribute copies, with instructions how and where to give them. His accounts correspond with the multitudes of people who possess them. I stand at the balcony of our window, and watch till I see a man *who looks likely*. . I throw a book to him.

On Monday [March 2], my next book<sup>1</sup> makes its appearance. This is addressed to a different class, recommending and proposing associations. I have in my mind a plan for proselytizing the young men at Dublin College. Those who are not entirely given up to the grossness of dissipation are perhaps reclaimable.—I know how much of good there is in human nature, spite of the overwhelming torrent of depravity which education unlooses. I see little instances of kindness and goodwill, almost everywhere, surely education, or impressions intentionally induced upon the mind, might foster and encourage the good, as it might eradicate the evil. This “Philanthropic Association” of ours is intended to unite both of these. Whilst you are with us in Wales, I shall attempt to organize one *there*, which shall correspond with the Dublin one. Might I not extend

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<sup>1</sup> “Proposals for an Association,” etc.

them all over England, and *quietly* revolutionize the country? How is Sussex disposed? is there much intellect there? We must have the cause before the effect. I cannot bear to hear people talk of the Glorious Revolution of 1688. Was that period glorious when, with a presumption only equalled by their stupidity, and a shortsightedness incommensurable but with the blindest egotism, Parliament affected to pass an Act delivering over themselves, and their posterity to the remotest period of time, to Mary and William, and their posterity? I saw this Act yesterday for the first time; and my blood boils to think that Sidney's and Hampden's blood was wasted thus, that even the "Defenders of Liberty," as they were called, were sunk thus low, and [should] thus attempt to arrest the perfectibility of human nature. I have not read B. Flower, but I will. I have heard of him. If he was a Calvinist, he is not now. I speak thus positively, merely from a small advertisement of his that I have seen.—I will get his book, and write to him, and you may thus become acquainted with him. Did you ever read the Abbé Barruel's "Memoirs of Jacobitism?" Although it is half filled with the vilest and most unsupported falsehoods, it is a book worth reading. To you who know how to distinguish truth, I recommend it.—My *youth* is much against me here. Strange that truth should not be judged by its inherent excellence, independent of any reference to the utterer! To improve on this *advantage*, the servant gave out that I was only 15 years of age. The person who was told this, of course, did not believe it.

I have not yet seen Curran. I do not like him for accepting the office of Master of the Rolls.—O'Connor,<sup>1</sup> brother to the rebel Arthur, is here: [I have] written to

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<sup>1</sup> D. F. MacCarthy says that Roger O'Connor (1762–1834) is alluded to here. He was one of the United Irishmen; arrested in 1797, but liberated the following year. He was imprisoned for some years with his brother Arthur, and re-arrested on a charge of robbing the Galway coach, but acquitted. He was father of Fergus O'Connor (1794–1855), the Chartist leader.



him.—Do not fear what you say in your letters.—I am resolved.—Good principles are scarce here. The public papers are either oppositionist or ministerial: one is as contemptible and narrow as the other. I wish I could change this. I of course am hated by both these parties. The remnant of united Irishmen, whose wrongs make them hate England, I have more hopes of. I have met with no determined Republicans, but I have found some who are *democratifiable*. I have met with some waverers between Christianity and Deism. I shall attempt to make them reject all the bad, and take all the good, of the Jewish books. I have often thought that the moral sayings of Jesus Christ might be very useful, if selected from the mystery and immorality which surrounds them; it is a little work I have in contemplation.<sup>1</sup> We shall leave this place at the end of April. I need not be idle in Wales: there you will come to us. Bring the dear little Americans, resign your school, and live with us for ever.—I have a firm persuasion in my own mind that duty and usefulness, as well as happiness and friendship, approve, sanction, and demand this plan. We have in this world some work to do, and only a certain time allotted us to do it in. How persuasive an argument for the combined exertion of intellectual power.

[Written by Harriet]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Percy has given me his letter to fill up, but what I'm to say I really do not know. Oh! yesterday I received a most affectionate letter from dear Mrs. C[alvert]. Now don't you be jealous when I mention her name. She is afraid we shall effect no good here, and that our opinion will change of the Irish. We have seen very little of them as yet, but when Percy is more known, I suppose we shall know more at the same time. My pen is very bad, according

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<sup>1</sup> The "little work" may have taken the form of the "Biblical Extracts" to which Shelley refers later in a letter to Hookham, p. 373.

to custom. I'm sure you would laugh were you to see us give the pamphlets. We throw them out of window,<sup>1</sup> and give them to men that we pass in the streets. For myself I am ready to die of laughter when it is done, and Percy looks so grave, yesterday he put one into a woman's hood of a cloak. She knew nothing of it, and we passed her. I could hardly get on, my muscles were so irritated.

[Written by Shelley]

I have been necessarily called away whilst Harriet has been scribbling. You may guess how much my time is taken up, by my dereliction of you.

Adieu. The post will go. You will soon hear again from

Your affectionate and unalterable  
PERCY.

[Addressed outside],  
single sheet,  
Miss HITCHENER,  
Hurstpierpoint,  
Brighton, Sussex,  
England.

## 128. TO WILLIAM GODWIN

[(London)]

[7 LOWER] SACKVILLE STREET, DUBLIN,

March 8, 1812.

MY DEAR SIR,

Your letter affords me much food for thought ; guide thou and direct me. In all the weakness of my inconsistencies, bear with me ; the genuine respect which I bear for your character, the love with which your virtues have inspired me, is undiminished by any suspicion of externally constituted authority ; when you reprove me, reason

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<sup>1</sup> The balcony of 7 Lower Sackville Street, from which Shelley and Harriet threw the copies of "The Address to the Irish People," was removed in 1884.



*From a drawing by F. Clementson after a woodcut*

**NO. 7 LOWER-SACKVILLE STREET, DUBLIN**

From the balcony of which Shelley and his wife threw the  
first Irish pamphlet





speaks ; I acquiesce in her decisions. I know that I am vain, that I assume a character which is perhaps unadapted to the limitedness of my experience, that I am without the modesty which is so generally considered an indispensable ornament to the ingenuousness of youth. I attempt not to conceal from others, or myself, these deficiencies, if such they are. That I have erred in pursuance of this line of conduct I am well aware : in the opposite case, I think that my errors would have been more momentous and overwhelming. " A preponderance of resulting good is imagined in every action." I certainly believe that the line of conduct which I am now pursuing will produce a preponderance of good ; when I get rid of this conviction, my conduct shall be changed.

Inquiry is doubtless necessary, nay, essential. I am eagerly open to every new information. I attempt to read a book which attacks my most cherished sentiments as calmly as one which corroborates them. I have not read your writings slightly ; they have made a deep impression on my mind ; their arguments are fresh in my memory ; I have daily occasion to recur to them, as allies in the cause which I am here engaged in vindicating. To them, to you, I owe the inestimable boon of granted power, of arising from the state of intellectual sickliness and lethargy into which I was plunged two years ago, and of which " St. Irvyne " and " Zastrozzi " were the distempered, although unoriginal visions.

I am not forgetful or unheeding of what you said of associations. But " Political Justice " was first published in 1793 ; nearly twenty years have elapsed since the general diffusion of its doctrines. What has followed ? Have men ceased to fight ? Have vice and misery vanished from the earth ? Have the fireside communications which it recommends taken place ? Out of the many who have read that inestimable book, how many have been blinded by prejudice ; how many, in short, have taken it up to gratify an ephemeral vanity, and when the hour of its novelty had

passed, threw it aside, and yielded with fashion to the arguments of Mr. Malthus ?

I have at length proposed a Philanthropic Association, which I conceive not to be contradictory, but strictly compatible with the principles of "Political Justice." The "Address" was principally designed to operate on the Irish *mob*. Can they be in a worse state than at present ? Intemperance and hard labour have reduced them to machines. The oyster that is washed and driven at the mercy of the tides, appears to me an animal of almost equal elevation in the scale of intellectual being. Is it impossible to awaken a moral sense in the breasts of those who appear so unfitted for the high destination of their nature ? Might not an unadorned display of moral truth, suited to their comprehensions, produce the best effects ? The state of society appears to me to be retrogressive. If there be any truth in the hopes which I so fondly cherish, then this cannot be. Yet, even if it be stationary, the eager activity of philanthropists is demanded. I think of the last twenty years with impatient scepticism, as to the progress which the human mind has made during this period. I will own that I am eager that something should be done. But my association. In some Suggestions<sup>1</sup> respecting it, I have the following—"That any number of persons who meet together for philanthropical purposes, should ascertain by friendly discussion those points of opinion wherein they differ and those wherein they coincide, and should, by subjecting them to rational analysis, produce an unanimity founded on reason, and not the superficial agreement too often exhibited at associations for mere party purposes ; that the minority, whose belief could not subscribe to the opinion of the majority on a division in any question of moment and interest, should recede."

"Some associations might, by refinement of secessions, contain not more than three or four members." I do not

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<sup>1</sup> These "Suggestions" do not appear to have been printed.

think a society such as this is incompatible with your chapter on associations; it purposes no violent or immediate measures; its intentions are a facilitation of inquiry, and actually to carry into effect those confidential and private communications which you recommend. I send you with this the proposals, which will be followed by the "suggestions."

I had no conception of the depth of human misery until now. The poor of Dublin are assuredly the meanest and most miserable of all. In their narrow streets thousands seem huddled together,—one mass of animated filth. With what eagerness do such scenes as these inspire me! How self confident, too, do I feel in my assumption to teach the lessons of virtue to those who grind their fellow beings into worse than annihilation. These were the persons to whom, in my fancy, I had addressed myself: how quickly were my views on this subject changed; yet how deeply has this very change rooted the conviction on which I came hither.

I do not think that my book can in the slightest degree tend to violence. The pains which I have taken, even to tautology, to insist on pacific measures; the necessity which every warrior and rebel must lie under to deny almost every passage of my book before he can become so, must at least exculpate *me* from tending to make him so. I shudder to think, that for the very roof that covers me, for the bed whereon I lie, I am indebted to the selfishness of man. A remedy must somewhere have a beginning. Have I explained myself clearly? Are we now at issue?

I have not seen Mr. Curran. I have called repeatedly, left my address and my pamphlet. I *will* see him before I leave Dublin. I send a newspaper and the "proposals."<sup>1</sup> I had no conception that the packet I sent you would be

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<sup>1</sup> The second Irish pamphlet, "Proposals for an Association of Philanthropists." Shelley here excuses himself for having sent Godwin the "Address to the Irish People" through the post as a newspaper, much to the philosopher's misfortune. See note to letter No. 125, p. 262.

sent by the post ; I thought it would have reached you per coach.

Harriet joins in respects to you. Is your denial respecting Wales irrevocable ? Would not your children gain health and spirits from the jaunt ?

With sincerest respect, yours,

P. B. SHELLEY.

You will see the account of ME in the newspapers. I am vain, but not so foolish as not to be rather piqued than gratified at the eulogia of a journal. I have repeated my injunctions concerning "St. I[rvyne]" and "Z[astrozzi]."

Expenditure is used in my address in a moral sense.

To Mr. WILLIAM GODWIN, London.

#### 129. TO ELIZABETH HITCHENER

(Hurstpierpoint)

17 GRAFTON STREET,

[DUBLIN],

March 10, 1812.

MY BELOVED FRIEND,

Your letters have arrived. I snatch time from circumstances of overwhelming interest to converse with you. My brain has scarcely time to consult my heart, or my heart to consult my brain ; yet with the remaining nature, with thee who constituted the Trinity of my Essence, I will converse. I cannot recount all the horrible instances of unrestricted and unlimited tyranny that have met my ears,—scarcely those which have personally occurred to me. An Irishman has been torn from his wife and family in Lisbon, because he was an expatriate, and compelled to serve as a common soldier in the Portuguese army, by that monster of anti-patriotic inhumanity *Beresford*, the idol of the belligerents. You will soon see a copy of his letter, and soon hear of my or Sir F. Burdett's exertions in his favor. He *shall* be free. This nation shall awaken. It is attended with circumstances singularly characteristic



of cowardice and tyranny. My blood boils to madness to think of it. A poor boy, whom I found starving with his mother in a hiding-place of unutterable filth and misery, whom I rescued, and was about to teach to read,—has been snatched, on a charge of false and villainous effrontery, to a magistrate of Hell, who gave him the alternative of the *tender* or of military servitude. He preferred neither, yet was compelled to be a soldier. This has come to my knowledge this morning. I am resolved to prosecute this business to the very jaws of Government, snatching (if possible) the poison from its fangs. A widow-woman with three infants were taken up by two constables. I remonstrated, I pleaded: I was everything that my powers could make me. The landlady was overcome. The constable relented: and, when I asked him if he had a heart, he said—To be sure he had, as well as another man, but—that he was called out to business of this nature sometimes twenty times in a night. The woman's crime was stealing a penny loaf. She is, however, drunken, and nothing that I or anyone can do can save her from ultimate ruin and starvation. I am sick of this city, and long to be with you and peace. The rich *grind* the poor into abjectness, and then complain that they are abject. They goad them to famine, and hang them if they steal a loaf.—Well, adieu to this! My own dearest friend, in the midst of these horrors thou art our star of peace—we look to thee for happiness; and, partial tho' the state of earth may render it, still will it be incomparable, and prophetic of that era when pain and vice shall vanish altogether. Your new suggestion of our joining you at Hurst is divine: it shall be so. I have not shown Harriet or E[liza] your letter yet: they are walking with a Mr. Lawless<sup>1</sup> (a valuable man) whilst I write this, but I venture to read delightful assent

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<sup>1</sup> John Lawless (1773-1837), the Irish agitator, familiarly known as "Honest Jack Lawless," was a distant cousin of the second Lord Cloncurry. Refused admittance to the Irish Bar in consequence of his connection with the United Irish Movement, he subsequently became the editor of *The Weekly Messenger*. He possibly wrote the

in the look of their hearts, and that without turning over a page. We will quit Wales with you : but more of that. —Besides, I would not live far from my uncle<sup>1</sup> ; I value, love and respect him. He was against this expedition ; besides [? but] conscience is a tribunal from which I dare not to appeal. In a day or two I shall make up a parcel to you, which will come per coach. It is a terrible mistake,<sup>2</sup> that of the last. The blundering honest Irishman<sup>3</sup> we have committed it. Send me the Sussex papers. Insert, or make them insert, the account of *me*. It may have a good effect on the minds of the people, as a preparation. I send you two to-night. The Association proceeds slowly, and I fear will not be established. Prejudices are so violent, in contradiction to my principles, that more hate me as a freethinker than love me as a votary of freedom. You will see my letter, next week, to the Editor of the panegyricizing paper. Some will call it violent. I have at least made a stir here, and set some men's minds afloat. I *may* succeed ; but I fear I shall not, in the main object of the Association.—Dublin is the most difficult of

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notice of Shelley's speech at the Aggregate Meeting of Catholics of Ireland, which appeared in that paper for March 7th, 1812. This meeting took place on Friday, February 28th, 1812, at the Fishamble Street Theatre, which was (according to the *Morning Chronicle*), "brilliantly illuminated. The boxes were filled with ladies, full dressed, and the whole is represented as having a very imposing effect." D. F. MacCarthy, whose "Shelley's Early Life" contains an invaluable history of the poet's Irish campaign, found references to Shelley's speech in the *Dublin Evening Post*, *Saunders' News Letter*, and *The Freeman's Journal* of Feb. 29, also *The Hibernian Journal* and *The Patriot* of March 2, the last-named paper containing the longest report. *The Freeman's Journal* says : "Mr. Shelley, an English gentleman (very young), the son of a Member of Parliament, rose to address the meeting. He was received with great kindness. . . ." The resolution (the 6th) to which Shelley spoke, was seconded by Mr. Wyse, afterwards the Rt. Hon. Sir Thomas Wyse (1791-1862), the politician and diplomatist.

<sup>1</sup> Captain Pilfold at Cuckfield, Sussex.

<sup>2</sup> Presumably in having made Miss Hitchener pay heavily for the postage of "The Address to the Irish People" which he sent to her as a newspaper. See p. 262.

<sup>3</sup> Daniel Hill (or Healey), Shelley's servant.

all. In Wales, I fear not : in Lewes, fear is ridiculous, I am certain.—Your book—that is a beautiful idea : cherish the spirit, and keep it alive. The Republic of Mexico proceeds and extends. I have seen American papers, but have not had time to read them. I only know that the spirit of Republicanism extends in South America, and that the prevailing opinion is that there will soon be no province which will recognize the ancient dynasty of Spain.<sup>1</sup>—I am in hopes of getting a share in the management of a paper here. I have daily had numbers of people calling on me : *none* will do. The spirit of Bigotry is high.

[*Written by Harriet*]

MY DEAR FRIEND,

A few days since, I received your letter, but which I do not attempt to answer at present. As you may suppose, we are full of business. Has Percy mentioned to you a very amiable man of the name of Lawless ? He is very much attached to the cause, yet dare not act. Percy has spoken to him of you, and he wishes very much to know all about you. We have this morning been introduced to his wife, who is very near her confinement : she is a very nice woman, though not equal to him. Your last letter has delighted me. The plan of keeping on your house is truly admirable : but what is to be done with your scholars—those you spoke of in your letter ? perhaps you might still continue to keep them. But of that more when we meet.

What has the Duke of Norfolk been saying of us ? Now tell me, as I think I can confute his lordship. Write to us soon. When will all this be at an end ? When you are among us. How I long for the time ! Do, dear, dear, what am I to call you ? hasten your departure for us. To Midsummer ! That will be such an immense

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<sup>1</sup> This prophecy has at length been fulfilled, but it was not until after the Spanish-American war of 1898 that Spain ceased to hold colonies in America. She abolished her colonial office as being "no longer necessary," in January, 1899.



time before it arrives. Do you know, I am so sick of this world that I long to be in another. Strange thing! I am [sure] you will say: yet, if you were here, you would do the same. But why do I say "here"? Do we not find tyranny and oppression everywhere? have you not plenty of it, even in your peaceful village? 'tis everywhere.—yes! there is one spot where it is not—America. We know an American: he says he has not seen a beggar there for this 8 years. How good you are thus to busy yourself about us, in this way!—Amiable woman! if I had known thee before, it would have been delightful: but I must be content I know you now, and this blessing I should not have had if I had never been to Clapham. So I must be content, and think myself very happy that I did go, though then I was not aware of the happiness that would result.

Send us the paper in which you have inserted the "Address!" I have sent you this, and hope you will receive it safe—though, to tell the truth, I have my doubts upon that head. You know we have heard from Godwin—such letters. You must long to read them I am sure.

I shall now finish my sad scrawl.

[Addressed outside],

[Franked by] T. SHELLEY, Esq., M.P.

Miss HITCHENER,

Hurstpierpoint,

Brighton, Sussex,

England.

### 130. TO ELIZABETH HITCHENER

(Hurstpierpoint)

17 GRAFTON STREET,

DUBLIN,

March 14, 1812.

[Written by Harriet]

Why does my dear friend continually mislead herself, and thus apply to my judgment which is so inferior to her



own ? 'tis true you have mixed more in the world than myself.—My knowledge has been very confined on account of my youth, and the situation in which I was placed. My intercourse with mankind has therefore been much less than you may imagine. When I lived with my Father, I was not likely to gain much knowledge, as our circle of acquaintance was very limited, he not thinking it proper that we should mix much with society. In short, we very seldom visited those places of fashionable resort and amusement which, from our age, might have been expected. 'Twas but seldom I visited my home, school having witnessed the greater part of my life. But do not think from this that I was ignorant of what was passing in the great world : books and a newspaper were sufficient to inform me of these. Tho' then a silent spectator, yet did I know that all was not as it ought to be. I looked with a fearful eye upon the vices of the great ; and thought to myself 'twas better even to be a beggar, or to be obliged to gain my bread with my needle, than to be an inhabitant of those great houses, when misery and famine howl around. I will tell you my faults, knowing what I have to expect from your friendship. Remember my youth : and, if any excuse can be made let that suffice. In London you know there are military as well as anywhere else. When quite a child, I admired these red-coats. This grew up with me ; and I thought the military the best as well as [the] most fascinating men in the world, though at the same time I used to declare never to marry one. This was not so much on account of their vices as from the idea of their being killed. I thought, if I married anyone, it should be a Clergyman. Strange idea this, was it not ? But being brought up in the Christian religion, 'twas this first gave rise to it. You may conceive with what horror I first heard that Percy was an atheist ; at least, so it was given out at *Clapham*. At first I did not comprehend the meaning of the word : therefore, when it was explained, I was truly petrified. I wondered how he could live a

moment, professing such principles, and solemnly declared that he should never change mine. I little thought of the rectitude of these principles ; and, when I wrote to him, I used to try to shake them, making sure he was in the wrong, and that myself was right ; yet I would listen to none of *his* arguments, so afraid I was that he should shake my belief. At the same time I believed in eternal punishment, and was dreadfully afraid of his supreme Majesty the Devil : I thought I should see him if I listened to his arguments. I often dreamed of him, and felt such terror when I heard his name mentioned : this was the effect of a bad education ; and living with *Methodists*. Now, however, this is entirely done away with, and my soul is no longer shackled with such idle fears. You cannot suppose, my dear friend, that I suspect you of jealousy : 'twould be entertaining an idea wholly unworthy of you. Jealousy is a passion known only to the illiberal and selfish part of mankind, who have been corrupted and spoilt by the world : but this forms no part of you,—'tis utterly impossible. As to that feeling which prompted you to write about gaining your own subsistence, I do not know by what name to define it. It could not be pride : at least, if it were, I must call it a virtuous pride that you would not be dependent upon another for subsistence when you had the means of being independent. This would be all very well, to persons that you did not love : but to us, who (I may say with truth) possess so much of your love, it is entirely ill-founded. You have given up this wild scheme, I make no doubt : indeed, your letter avows as much. To continue to think so now would be unworthy of the warmth of that friendship you have solemnly sworn to keep inviolate. Such a valuable friendship as ours ought not to be intruded on by such worldly cares : it is too sublime and too sure. Therefore I pray thee take no thought what ye shall eat, and what ye shall wear. Our living is different to those worldlings, and you may or not adopt it as you think fit. You do not know that

we have forsworn meat, and adopted the Pythagorean system.<sup>1</sup> About a fortnight has elapsed since the change, and we do not find ourselves any the worse for it. What do you think of it? Many say it is a very bad plan: but, as facts go before arguments, we shall see whether the general opinion is true or false. We are delighted with it, and think it is the best thing in the world. As yet there is but little change of vegetables; but the time of year is coming on when there will be no deficiency. Your wishes coincide with mine. I see you are as eager to meet us as we are you; in one of my letters I am so eager that I have begged you to leave Hurst and join us in Wales before Mid[summer]; but you have explained some of your reasons, and I retract my words, tho' not my wishes.

Have you heard anything of the Habeas Corpus Act being suspended? I have been very much alarmed at the intelligence, tho' I hope it is ill-founded. If it is not, where we shall be is not known; as from Percy's having made himself so busy in the cause of the poor Country, he has raised himself many enemies who would take advantage of such a time, and instantly execute their vengeance upon him. That this may not be the case I hardly dare to hope. What can be their reason for so doing is best known to themselves. That many innocent victims will suffer is a foreboding that my heart trembles at; yet so it will be, I'm most fearful, and how is this to be remedied? God knows, and not me: but more of this when I hear how it is decided. I do not like the name you have taken<sup>2</sup>: but mind, only the name. You are fully worthy of it; but, being a name so much out of the

<sup>1</sup> From this, the first reference to Shelley's vegetarianism, which played no inconsiderable part in his life, it would appear that he first adopted the "system" at the beginning of March, 1812. See note on p. 284.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. MacCarthy suggests that the name *Portia* by which Harriet addresses Miss Hitchener in her letter of March 18, 1812, should be *Porcia*, the daughter of Cato and wife of Brutus. Was this the name that Miss Hitchener had selected, and to which Harriet here refers?

common way, it excites so much curiosity in the mind of the hearer. This is my only reason for not liking it. I had thought it would have been one more common, and more pleasing to the ear.

I must now bid my beloved sister adieu.

Do not write under the seal.

[Written by Shelley]

You will hear from *me* soon : part of me has written to you.

I do not like Lord Fingal, or *any* of the Catholic aristocracy. Their intolerance can be equalled by nothing but the hardy wickedness and falsehood of the Prince. My speech was misinterpreted.<sup>1</sup> I spoke for more than an hour. The hisses with which they greeted me when I spoke of *religion*, though in terms of respect, were mixed with applause when I avowed my mission. The newspapers have only noted that which did not excite disapprobation. As to an Association, my hopes daily grow fainter on that subject, as my perceptions of its necessity gain strength.—I shall soon however have the command of a Newspaper with Mr. Lawless, of whom I shall tell you more : this will be a powerful engine of amelioration. Mr. L., though he regards my ultimate hopes as visionary, is willing to acquiesce in my means. He is a republican.

Adieu. Believe that we are yours. We will live with you at Hurst. What think you of a journey to Italy in the autumn ?

I hope, my beloved friend, that you have conquered that nervous headache which you mention. Do not *think* too much ; do not feel too keenly. Blunt neither sensation nor reflection by anything but occupation. For you, this occupation ought sometimes to be trivial.

My dear friend, adieu.

[Addressed outside],

single sheet,

Miss HITCHENER,

Hurstpierpoint,

Brighton, Sussex (England).

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<sup>1</sup> See note to letter No. 129, p. 275.



## HARRIET SHELLEY TO ELIZABETH HITCHENER

[This letter enclosed in a box containing copies of Shelley's pamphlet "An Address to the Irish People" and his broadside "Declaration of Rights," was never delivered to Miss Hitchener, having been seized at Holyhead. The letter is now in the Public Record Office. The "Declaration of Rights" was a composition of Shelley's so termed, consisting of thirty-one axioms, printed in Dublin as a broadsheet, "in favour," as Mr. W. M. Rossetti says, "of absolute control by the commissioning body, the nation at large, over its delegates, the Government; advocating also unlimited freedom of opinion and expression, the abolition of war, and so on." Mr. Rossetti, who was the first to draw attention to the "Declaration" in *The Fortnightly Review*, Jan., 1871, shows certain points of resemblance between Shelley's sheet and "the two most famous similar documents in the history of the great French Revolution—the one adopted by the constituent assembly in August, 1789, and the other proposed in April, 1793, by Robespierre." The copy contained in this box, with Harriet Shelley's letter, was sent by the Post Office agent for the Packet Boats at Holyhead, to the Secretary to the General Post Office, Mr., afterwards, Sir Francis Freeling. See note to letter 116, p. 227, and Mr. MacCarthy's "Shelley's Early Life," pp. 308, 323.

DUBLIN,

March 18, [1812].

MY DEAR PORTIA,

As Percy has sent you such a large Box so full of inflammable matter, I think I may be allowed to send a little, but not [of] such a nature as his. I sent you two letters in a newspaper, which I hope you received safe from the intrusion of Post-masters. I sent one of the Pamphlets to my Father in a newspaper, which was opened and charged, but which was very trifling when compared to what you and Godwin paid.

I believe I have mentioned a new acquaintance of ours, a Mrs. Nugent,<sup>1</sup> who is sitting in the room now and talking to Percy about Virtue. You see how little I stand upon ceremony. I have seen her but twice before, and I find her a very agreeable, sensible woman. She has felt most severely the miseries of her country, in which she has been a very active member. She visited all the Prisons in the

<sup>1</sup> Miss Catherine Nugent became a regular correspondent of Harriet Shelley's, and her letters, from transcripts made from the originals (in 1881) by Mr. Alfred Webb, were subsequently printed in the *New York Nation* in 1889. Mr. Webb had previously lent his transcripts to Professor Dowden while he was writing his "Life of Shelley," giving him leave to use any information in them, but requesting him (out of consideration for Miss Nugent's niece, who was then living) neither to quote from, nor to refer to the correspondence in his work. Mr. T. J. Wise afterwards privately printed the letters. These letters throw such an important light on the lives of Shelley and his wife, that I feel no excuse is needed for including

time of the Rebellion, to exhort the people to have courage and hope. She says it was a most dreadful task ; but it was her duty, and she would not shrink from the performance of it. This excellent woman, with all her notions of Philanthropy and Justice, is obliged to work for her subsistence—to work in a shop which is a furrier's ; there she is every day confined to her needle. Is it not a thousand pities that such a woman should be so dependent upon others ? She has visited us this evening for about three hours, and is now returned home. The evening is the only time she can get out in the week ; but Sunday is her own, and then we are to see her. She told Percy that her country was her only love, when he asked her if she was

them in the present collection of Shelley's correspondence. I do so by the kindness of Professor Dowden, who now owns the original correspondence, and who has enabled me to print the letters correctly. Dr. Anster, who was acquainted with Miss Nugent, refers to her in his article on Shelley in the *North British Review* for 1847. He says : " One copy of Shelley's pamphlet [" The Address to the Irish People "] was obtained through an Irish friend of Shelley's, whose acquaintance with the poet originated accidentally. A poor man offered the pamphlet for a few pence—its price stated on the title-page was fivepence. On being asked how he got it, he said a parcel of them were given him by a young gentleman who told him to get what he could for them—at all events to distribute them. Inquiry was made at Shelley's lodgings to ascertain the truth of the vendor's story. He was not at home, but when he heard of it he went to return the visit, and a kindly acquaintance thus arose. The Shelleys, husband and wife, were then Pythagoreans. Shelley spoke as a man believing in the metempsychosis, and they did not eat animal food. They seem, however, to have tolerated it ; for on one occasion a fowl was murdered for our friend's dinner. Of the first Mrs. Shelley, the recollection of our friend is faint, but is of an amiable and unaffected person, very young and very pleasing, and she and Shelley seemed much attached." The " poor man " referred to above was evidently Daniel Hill (or Healey), who was in Shelley's employment. The letter containing the allusion to the murdered fowl is the following :—

" Sunday mornng. [? March 15, 1812]

" 17 Grafton Street [Dublin].

" Mrs. Shelley's comps. to Mrs. Nugent, and expects the pleasure of her company to dinner, 5 o'clock, as a murdered chicken has been prepared for her repast."

[Addressed outside], Mrs. Nugent, 101 Grafton Street.

This letter was followed by another note, without date—

" Wednesday. 17 Grafton St. [Dublin].

" If you are not engaged will you give us your company this evening as Mr. S. is not at home."

The rest of Harriet's correspondence with Catherine Nugent will be found in its chronological order.

married. She called herself *Mrs.*, I suppose on account of her age, as she looks rather old for a *Miss*. She has never been out of her country, and has no wish to leave it.

This is St. Patrick's night,<sup>1</sup> and the Irish always get very tipsy on such a night as this. The Horse Guards are pacing the streets, and will be so all the night, so fearful are they of disturbances, the poor people being very much that way inclined, as Provisions are very scarce in the southern counties. Poor Irish People, how much I feel for them. Do you know, such is their ignorance, that when there is a drawing-room held, they go from some distance to see the people who keep them starving, to get their luxuries; they will crowd round the state carriages in great glee to see those within who have stripped them of their rights, and who wantonly revel in a profusion of ill-gotten luxury, whilst so many of those harmless people are wanting Bread for their wives and children. What a spectacle! People talk of the fiery spirit of these distressed creatures, but that spirit is very much broken and ground down by the oppressors of this poor country. I may with truth say there are more Beggars in this city than any other in the world. They are so poor they have hardly a rag to cover their naked limbs, and such is their passion for drink, that when you relieve them one day you see them in the same deplorable situation the next. Poor creatures, they live more on whiskey than anything, for meat is so dear they cannot afford to purchase any. If they had the means I do not know that they would, whiskey being so much cheaper, and to their palates so much more desirable. Yet how often do we hear people say that poverty is no evil. I think if they had experienced it they would soon alter their tone. To my idea it is the worst of all evils, as the miseries that flow from it are certainly very great; the many crimes we hear of daily are the consequences of Poverty and that to a very great degree; I think the Laws are extremely unjust—they condemn a Person to Death for stealing 13 shillings and 4 pence.

Disperse the "Declarations." Percy says the farmers are very fond of having something posted upon their walls.

Percy has sent you all his Pamphlets with the "Declaration of Rights," which you will disperse to advantage. He has not many of his first "Address," having taken great pains to circulate them through this city.

All thoughts of an Association are given up as impracticable. We shall leave this noisy town on the 7th of April, unless the Habeas Corpus Act should be suspended, and then we shall be obliged to leave here *as soon as possible*. Adieu.

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<sup>1</sup> This shows that Harriet's letter was written on the 17th of March, and not on the "18th," as she has dated it. Unless, indeed, the usual St. Patrick's Ball at Dublin Castle was for some reason held on the 18th of March, instead of the 17th, in the year 1812.



## 131. TO WILLIAM GODWIN

17 GRAFTON STREET [DUBLIN],

March 18, 1812.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have said that I acquiesce in your decision, nor has my conduct militated with the assertion.<sup>1</sup> I have withdrawn from circulation the publications wherein I erred, and am preparing to quit Dublin. It is not because I think that *such* associations as I conceived, would be deleterious, that I have withdrawn them. It is possible to festinate, or retard, the progress of human perfectibility; such associations as I would have recommended would be calculated to produce the former effect; the refinement of secessions would prevent a fictitious unanimity, as their publicity would render ineffectual any schemes of violent innovation. I am not one of those whom pride will restrain from admitting my own short-sightedness, or confessing a conviction which wars with those previously avowed. My schemes of organizing the ignorant I confess to be ill-timed. I cannot conceive that they were dangerous, as unqualified publicity was likewise enforced; moreover, I do not see that a peasant would attentively read my address, and, arising from the perusal, become imbued in sentiments of violence and bloodshed.

It is indescribably painful to contemplate beings capable of soaring to the heights of science, with Newton and Locke, without attempting to awaken them from a state of lethargy so opposite. The part of this city called the Liberty, exhibits a spectacle of squalidness and misery, such as

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<sup>1</sup> Godwin in his letter to Shelley of March 14, 1812, shows his disapprobation of the poet's Irish Campaign, and concludes: "I wish to my heart you would come immediately to London. I have a friend who has contrived a tube to convey passengers sixty miles an hour. Be youth your tube! I have a thousand things I could say orally, more than I can say in a letter, on this important subject. Away! You cannot imagine how much all the females of my family, Mrs. G. and three daughters, are interested in your letters and history."—Hogg's "Shelley," Vol. II, p. 99.



might reasonably excite impatience in a cooler temperament than mine. But I submit ; I shall address myself no more to the illiterate. I will look to events in which it will be impossible that I can share, and make myself the cause of an effect which will take place ages after I have mouldered in the dust ; I need not observe that this resolve requires stoicism. To return to the heartless bustle of ordinary life, to take interest in its uninteresting details ; I cannot. Wholly to abstract our views from self, undoubtedly requires unparalleled disinterestedness. There is not a completer abstraction than labouring for distant ages.

My association scheme undoubtedly grew out of my notions of political justice, first generated by your book on that subject. I had not, however, read in vain of confidential discussions, and a recommendation for their general adoption ; not in vain had I been warned against a fictitious unanimity. I have had the opportunity of witnessing the latter at public dinners. The peculiarity of my association would have consisted in combining the adoption of the former with the rejection of the latter. Moreover, I desired to sink the question of immediate grievance in the more general and remote consideration of a highly perfectible state of society. I desired to embrace the present opportunity for attempting to forward the accomplishment of that event, and my ultimate views looked to an establishment of those familiar parties for discussion which have not yet become general.

It appears to me that on the publication of " Political Justice " you looked to a more rapid improvement than has taken place. It is my opinion, that if your book had been as general as the Bible, human affairs would now have exhibited a very different aspect.

I have read your letters—read them with the attention and reverence they deserve. Had I, like you, been witness to the French Revolution, it is probable that my caution would have been greater. I have seen and heard enough to make me doubt the omnipotence of truth in a society so

constituted as that wherein we live. I shall make you acquainted with all my proceedings ; if I err, probe me severely.

If I was alone, and had made no engagements, I would immediately come to London : as it is, I defer it for a time. We leave Dublin in three weeks.

A woman of extraordinary talents,<sup>1</sup> whom I am so happy as to enroll in the list of those who esteem me, has engaged to visit me in Wales. Mrs. Shelley earnestly desires me to make one last attempt to induce you to visit Wales. If *you* absolutely cannot, may not your amiable family, with whom we all long to become acquainted, breathe with us the pure air of the mountains ? Lest there be any informality in the petition, Mrs. Shelley desires her regards to Mrs. Godwin, and family, urging the above. Miss Westbrook, my sister-in-law, resides with us ; and, in one thing at least, none of us are deficient, viz., zeal and sincerity.

Fear no more for any violence, or hurtful measures, in which I may be instrumental in Dublin. My mind is now by no means settled on the subject of associations : they appear to me in one point of view useful, in another deleterious. I acquiesce in your decisions. I am neither haughty, reserved, nor unpersuadable. I hope that time will show your pupil to be more worthy of your regard than you have hitherto found him ; at all events, that he will never be otherwise than sincere and true to you.

P. B. SHELLEY.

To Mr. WILLIAM GODWIN, London.

132. TO THOMAS CHARLES MEDWIN

(Horsham)

DUBLIN, No. 17 GRAFTON STREET,  
March 20, 1812.

MY DEAR SIR,

The tumult of business and travelling has prevented my addressing you before.

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<sup>1</sup> Miss Elizabeth Hitchener.

I am now engaged with a literary friend in the publication of a voluminous History of Ireland,<sup>1</sup> of which two hundred and fifty pages are already printed, and for the completion of which, I wish to raise two hundred and fifty pounds. I could obtain undeniable security for its payment at the expiration of eighteen months. Can you tell me how I ought to proceed? *The work* will produce great profits.

As you will see by the Lewes paper, I am in the midst of overwhelming engagements. My kindest regards to all your family. Be assured I shall not forget you or them.

My dear Sir,

Yours very truly,

P. B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],

T. C. MEDWIN, Esq.,

Horsham, Sussex, England.

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<sup>1</sup> Subsequently published as a "Compendium of the History of Ireland, from the Earliest Period to the Reign of George I. By John Lawless, Esq., a member of the Catholic Board, Dublin, 1814." Mr. MacCarthy says ("Shelley's Early Life," p. 298), "The work, though not published till 1814, was well known to be in preparation shortly after Shelley left Dublin. The following curious allusion to it will be found in Dr. Brennan's *Milesian Magazine* for July, 1812, p. 87. 'Jack Squintum' was the sobriquet of John Lawless in this scurrilous publication: "'Jack Squintum's History of Ireland.' The public will learn, with much attention, that a history of Ireland, from the Creation to the present hour, is about to be published by that illustrious literator, 'Jack Squintum.'""

## VI.—NANTGWILLT

April 16—June 18, 1812

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THE Voyage from Ireland—Seeking for a House in Wales—At Nantgwilt—Miss Hitchener and the Sussex Scandal-mongers—Harriet's Illness—Miss Hitchener Invited to Nantgwilt—Mr. Hitchener—At Mr. Grove's—"A Letter to Lord Ellenborough."

132A. TO ELIZABETH HITCHENER  
(Hurstpierpoint).

NANTGWILLT, RHAYADER,  
RADNORSHIRE.

[? April 16, 1812.]

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

How surprised you must be at my long silence. To what may you not attribute it? What fears, suspicions, misgivings, may not have come over you. Believe me, [I] have felt them all, but I was unwilling to write to you when I could tell you of nothing but our little distresses. Every day for this fortnight have I anticipated that the next would be the last of our wanderings, and that then I might welcome you to something like a home. We left Dublin,<sup>1</sup> and arrived at Holyhead after a passage of wearisome length. We have traversed the whole of Wales and heard no tidings of a house; every inn we stopped at was the subject of new hopes, and new disappointments. We came from Barmouth to Aberystwith, thirty miles, in an open boat; and at length have arrived at Rhayader—the very spot where I spent last summer, and are about to take a house which its tenant is forced to quit, from

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<sup>1</sup> The Shelleys left Dublin on Saturday, April 4, and arrived at Nantgwilt on April 14.



Bankruptcy; it is within a mile of Mr. Grove's.—The house is a good one; what I mean by good is that there is plenty of room for all of us. There are 200 acres of arable land, including some woodland, and the whole subject to the moderate rent of £98 a year, which I hope to make the farming more than pay. The house is not *yet* our own, altho' we reside here; but will be so in the course of a month. Oh my friend, what shall I say of the scenery? but *you* will enjoy it with us, which is all that is wanting to render it a perfect Heaven.

I know the misgivings that come over us when we have not heard from a friend for a long time; and when we think that he *might* have written, that he is cooled in the ardency of his attachment, and that other occupations have more charms for him than friendship.—But it is not so with me. I will not here re-assert all my assertions of friendship; but a hint that my perceptions of your excellences are unbounded, is enough between such as us.—The end of June is the time fixed for our meeting. Oh that the hours which divide that time from the present may roll fast! But it *will* come. Time's pace never varies: the hopes of those who sigh for a reunion, and the fears of those who anticipate a separation, hasten not its inevitable arrival. I have a plan in embryo. In June we will part no more. This house is large; it will contain seven bedrooms. Could not your father accompany you? He understands a farm, and its management would be an amusement to him. He might then *always* enjoy your society, which he cannot now; and it might be a comfort to his declining years to see you independently settled—for it *would be independent*. Now consider this. You have ere this received our box and its contents.<sup>1</sup> I paid the carriage as far as I could, that is, across the Channel; and I am positive that it did not come by the post. The "Declaration of Rights" would be useful in farm-houses:

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<sup>1</sup> The box never arrived. See note to Harriet Shelley's letter of March 18, 1812.

it was by a similar expedient that Franklin promulgated his commercial opinions among the Americans. Your letter enjoined us to leave Dublin. We received it a short time before we had settled to depart. The Habeas Corpus Act has not been suspended, nor probably will they do it. We left Dublin because I had done all that I could do ; if its effects were beneficial, they were not greatly so. I am dissatisfied with my success, but not with the attempt ; although the expense of our journey was considerable, and I ever bear in my mind that "economy is the truest generosity." Manchester, Carlisle, Bristol, and other great towns, are in a state of disturbance. That infernal wretch the P[rince] of Wales demands more money, the Princesses must have more<sup>1</sup> ; Mr. McMahon must have more. And for what ? For supplying the Augean stable of the Prince with filth which no second Hercules can cleanse. The question becomes one in the rule of three. If the murderer of Marr's family,<sup>2</sup> containing six persons, deserves a gibbet, how much more does a Prince whose conduct destroys millions deserve it ? In Wales they are

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<sup>1</sup> The Prince Regent's reckless extravagance and debauchery, while the country was suffering from great depression and poverty, were subjects of severe censure in the Radical newspapers of the time ; and Leigh Hunt's comments had been unusually severe. In the *Examiner* for March 22, 1812, appeared the article entitled "The Prince on St. Patrick's Day," which led to Leigh Hunt and his brother, John Hunt, being sentenced to two years' imprisonment, and fined £500 each. Questions had been raised in the House of Commons on March 23 regarding the Prince Regent's debts, the increased incomes of the Queen and Princesses, and the salary of Colonel McMahon, who had been appointed to the new office of Keeper of the Privy Purse.

<sup>2</sup> Williams, the Ratcliffe Highway murderer (of Mr. Marr's family) here alluded to, had destroyed two families, and then committed suicide. The *Examiner* for Jan. 5, 1812, contains a grim account of the night interment of Williams at the crossing of four roads in Whitechapel with a wooden stake driven through his body. De Quincey has immortalised Williams in his essay "On Murder, Considered as one of the Fine Arts," and Charles Lamb, on asking his kind-hearted friend, George Dyer, what he thought of Williams, drew from him that incomparable reply : "I should think, Mr. Lamb, he must have been rather an eccentric character."

all very apathetical on the subject of politics. We will converse on what can be done here when you come. How will the Groves admire our conduct? What will they think of *you*? If you think it will have any good effect, I will write a letter to the Chairman, or whatever you call him, of your book-club, recommending some further organization of the society. What think you of this? I have written some verses on Robert Emmett,<sup>1</sup> which you shall see, and which I will insert in my book of Poems.

We are now embosomed in the solitude of mountains, woods, and rivers—silent, solitary, and old, far away from any town; six miles from Rhayader, which is nearest. A ghost haunts this house, which has frequently been seen by the servants. We have several witches in our neighbourhood, and are quite stocked with fairies and hobgoblins of every description. Well, my dear friend, I have no larger paper, and therefore must say adieu. Recollect that I am still your friend completely and unalterably. Harriet and Eliza send their love. Harriet is now writing to Mrs. Nugent,<sup>2</sup> an excellent woman whom we discovered in Dublin, and of whom she will tell you.—Adieu.

Yours eternally,

P. B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],

single sheet,

Miss HITCHENER,

Hurstpierpoint,

Brighton, Sussex.

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<sup>1</sup> Prof. Dowden in his "Life of Shelley" (Vol. I, p. 208), prints two verses from an unpublished poem of seven stanzas on Robert Emmett. It is possible that this poem may have been written in Dublin.

<sup>2</sup> The following is Harriet Shelley's letter alluded to above, written to Catherine Nugent two days after the Shelleys arrived at Nantgwilt. It is valuable, for at least one reason, in enabling the date to be fixed of Shelley's departure from Dublin, and his arrival at Nantgwilt.



Direct, NANTGWILLT, RHAYADER, RADNORSHIRE,  
SOUTH WALES,

April 16 [1812].

MY DEAR MRS. NUGENT,—After travelling over an immense tract of country in the hopes of finding a house in which it would be our greatest joy to welcome a *native of that country* so dear to my recollection, tho' at the same time so painful to the feelings of one who unfortunately, being an *Englishwoman*, must never hope to see realised her warmest wishes in behalf of a *nation* so deserving of every happiness which this and the next world can afford. You know when we left Dublin [on Saturday, April 4] the wind was against us : but by making several tacks we contrived to get out of harbour, and continued sailing 36 hours when we had been informed that at the most we should certainly be no more than 12 hours. There is no dependence upon the word of a sailor, you may have heard me say, and now I am more confirmed in it. We did not arrive at Holyhead till near 2 o'clock on Monday morning. Then we had above a mile to walk over rock and stone in a pouring rain before we could get to the inn. The night was dark and stormy ; but the sailors had lanterns, or else I think it would have been better to have remained on board. As soon as we could get supper we did. We did not eat anything for 36 hours, all the time we were on board, and immediately began *upon meat* ; you will think this very extraordinary, but Percy and my sister suffered so much by the voyage, and we were so weakened by the vegetable system, that had they still continued it would have been seeking a premature grave. I fared the best of any as I slept most part of the time. On Tuesday [April 7] we began travelling, and that day week [April 14] we found our way here. Strange as it may appear, we have been all through North Wales to find a house, but not one presented itself, nor should we have this if a very unpleasant circumstance had not taken place. The person to whom it belongs was a sea-captain, and a brother-in-law of his has involved him in bankruptcy by very unfair means, and has himself absconded with £2,000, therefore now all this man's property is to go to satisfy the creditors. He was his partner in this country's bank and has defrauded many people of their money. The beauty of this place is not to be described. It is quite an old family house, with a farm of 200 acres meadow land. The rent is £98 a year, which we think very cheap ; but by letting a part of the farm we can reduce it to £20 per annum. I must now say adieu. We all unite in kind regards, and believe me your sincere friend, H.S.

[Addressed outside],

Mrs. NUGENT,

No. 101 Grafton Street,  
Dublin, Ireland.



133. TO WILLIAM GODWIN  
(London)

NANTGWILT, RHAYADER, RADNORSHIRE, SOUTH WALES,  
April 25, 1812.

MY DEAR SIR,

At length we are in a manner settled. The difficulty of obtaining a house in Wales (like many other difficulties) is greater than I had imagined. We determined, on quitting Dublin, to settle in Merionethshire, the scene of Fleetwood's early life,<sup>1</sup> but there we could find not even temporary accommodation. We traversed the whole of North and part of South Wales fruitlessly, and our peregrinations have occupied nearly all the time since the date of my last.

We are no longer in Dublin. Never did I behold in any other spot a contrast so striking as that which grandeur and misery form in that unfortunate country. How forcibly do I feel the remark which you put into the mouth of Fleetwood, that the distress which in the country humanizes the heart by its infrequency, is calculated in a city, by the multiplicity of its demands for relief, to render us callous to the contemplation of wretchedness. Surely the inequality of rank is not felt so oppressively in England. Surely something might be devised for Ireland, even consistent with the present state of politics, to ameliorate its condition. Curran at length called on me. I dined twice at his house. Curran is certainly a man of great abilities, but it appears to me that he undervalues his powers when he applies them to what is usually the subject of his conversation. I may not possess sufficient taste to relish humour, or his incessant comicality may weary that which I possess. He does not possess that mould of mind which I have been accustomed to contemplate with the highest feelings of respect and love. In short, though Curran indubitably possesses a strong understanding and a brilliant fancy, I should not have beheld him with the feelings of

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<sup>1</sup> Godwin's novel, "Fleetwood," was published in 1805.

admiration which his first visit excited, had he not been your intimate friend.

Nantgwillt, the place where we now reside, is in the neighbourhood of scenes marked deeply on my mind by the thoughts which possessed it when present among them. The ghosts of these old friends have a dim and strange appearance when resuscitated in a situation so altered as mine is, since I felt that they were alive.<sup>1</sup> I have never detailed to you my short, yet eventful life; but when we meet, if my account be not candid, sincere, and full, how unworthy should I be of such a friend and adviser as that whom I now address! We are not yet completely certain of being able to obtain the house where now we are. It has a farm of two hundred acres, and the rent is but ninety-eight pounds per annum. The cheapness, beauty, and retirement make this place in every point of view desirable. Nor can I view this scenery—mountains and rocks seeming to form a barrier round this quiet valley, which the tumult of the world may never overleap; the guileless habits of the Welsh—without associating *your* presence with the idea, that of your wife, your children, and one other friend, to complete the picture which my mind has drawn to itself of felicity. Steal, if possible, my revered friend, one summer from the cold hurry of business, and come to Wales.—Adieu!

Harriet desires to join me in kindest remembrances to yourself, Mrs. G., and family. She joins also in earnest wishes that you would all visit us.

To Mr. WILLIAM GODWIN, London.

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<sup>1</sup> Since Shelley's visit to Cwm Elan in the summer of 1811, after his rejection by Harriet Grove, and his expulsion from Oxford, many important events had taken place in his life. During that year he had married Harriet Westbrook, had lost the friendship (at least for a time) of his friend Hogg, and had conducted a campaign in Ireland; he had also begun and continued a voluminous correspondence with William Godwin and Elizabeth Hitchener. Shelley commemorated his feelings on revisiting these scenes, in a poem entitled "The Retrospect: Cwm Elan, 1812," first printed by Professor Dowden in his "Life of Shelley," Vol. I, pp. 270-4.

## 134. TO THOMAS CHARLES MEDWIN

(Horsham)

NANTGWILLT, RHAYADER, RADNORSHIRE,

April 25, 1812.

MY DEAR SIR,

After all my wanderings, I have at length arrived at Nantgwillt, near Mr. T. Grove's. I could find no house throughout the north of Wales, and the merest chance conducted me to this spot. Mr. Hooper, the present proprietor, is a bankrupt, and his assignees are empowered to dispose of the lease, stock and furniture, which I am anxious to purchase. They will all be taken at a valuation, and Mr. T. Grove has kindly promised to find a proper person to stand on my side. The assignees are willing to give me credit for eighteen months, or longer, but being a minor my signature is invalid. Would you object to join your name in my bond, or rather, to pledge yourself for my standing by the agreement when I come of age? The sum is likely to be six or seven hundred pounds.

The farm is about two hundred acres, one hundred and thirty acres arable, the rest wood and mountain. The house is a very good one, the rent ninety-eight pounds, which appears abundantly cheap.

My dear sir, now pray answer me by return of post, as I am at present in an unpleasant state of suspense with regard to this affair, as so eligible an opportunity for settling in a cheap, retired, romantic spot will scarcely occur again.

Remember me most kindly to all your family.

Yours very truly,

P. B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],

T. C. MEDWIN, Esq.,

Horsham, Sussex.

## 135. TO ELIZABETH HITCHENER

(Hurstpierpoint)

NANTGWILLT, [RHAYADER,  
RADNORSHIRE],

April 29th, 1812.

Harriet has not been able to write to you. She is now recovering from a bilious attack which so overpowered her with languor that she could not hold a pen. I wonder not that the confidence which my friend ought to have in such a self as hers, is shaken by the number of her enemies, until I think of their despicable qualities ; and then I recur to the friendlessness of her present situation to account for the self-desertion by which you are overwhelmed. Arouse yourself ! Yet a little, bear the sternness of your thorny solitude, bear desertion, contumely, and hatred (for it is the contumely and hatred of those who know you not) and friendship and duty will soon strew on a path too flinty yet the flowers of hope and peace. Oh my dearest friend, do not think of not living with us. What ! because a few paltry village-gossips repeat some silliness of their own invention till they believe it, shall those resolves be shaken which ought to survive the shock of elements and crash of worlds ? What is there in the Captain's disapproval ? he has been an uncle to me, I owe him gratitude for his kindness ; but am I prescribed to take his word ? I have examined this affair on every side, and I withdraw not an iota of my former convictions. —It raises a smile of bitterness at the world when I think on the *only possible* report which Mrs. Pilfold can have treated you with. What will she have recourse to next ? I unfaithful to my Harriet ! *You* a female Hogg ! Common sense should laugh such an idea to scorn, if indignation



would wait till it could be looked upon !—But, my friend, I do not believe there are any reports abroad in this country concerning us ; Mrs. Pilfold of Cuckfield is the origin of them all. You may have another enemy. Mrs. P[ilfold] wants you in the country to educate her child. She has made these reports, and then reported them to detain you. I see how it is. She has imposed on her husband. *His* nature is as open and unsuspecting as hers is artful and intriguing.<sup>1</sup> Last night, when your letter came, I did reconsider the plan. It looked almost like a blasphemy on truth when I had done. I blushed in my soul that I had doubted immutable and eternal rectitude. I will do so no more. *You* have probably considered it. I doubt not the result of your deliberations being favourable. Whatever it may now be, I have such confidence in the omnipotence of truth that it must be so ultimately. Harriet has just said, “*She shall not stay away :*” and never was there a prophesy that is so creditable to truth and friendship. Adieu. Keep up your spirits : it will soon be over, it is the probationary state before we all enter the heaven of virtue and friendship.

My dearest of friends, sustain yourself for your unalterable friend.

Harriet and Eliza send their love : *they* will not hear of any alteration.

In haste, yours ever faithfully,

PERCY.

[Addressed outside],  
Miss HITCHENER,  
Hurstpierpoint,  
Brighton, Sussex.

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<sup>1</sup> Certain scandalous reports regarding Shelley and Miss Hitchener were at this time being circulated, without any foundation, throughout Hurstpierpoint, Cuckfield, and Horsham. Shelley, as we see, believed that his aunt, Mrs. Pilfold, had originated these scandals fearing that her children were in danger of losing an excellent governess if Miss Hitchener paid her promised visits.

136. TO ELIZABETH HITCHENER  
(Hurstpierpoint)

[NANTGWILLT, RHAYADER,  
RADNORSHIRE,

April 29, 1812.]

I write this scrap (I have time for no more) because I have just received your last. I will write on Thursday, our next post-day. Harriet is still so unwell as to be unable to write. She desires her kindest love, however, and joins with Eliza and myself in determining never to submit to a repeal of our plans. Pray write me an account of the reports. I find that I have mistaken their nature. At all events, my beloved friend, keep up your spirits, keep up your resolves.—May you not be mistaken in attributing excellences to your father which he does not possess! Both he and the Captain seem at least to share some of their qualities with the mule. I think Mrs. Pilfold has made these reports. But, whatever caused them, of what consequence are they to you? I have written to the Captain: the letter is calculated to make his soul start back to see it.—Never doubt what the heart and the head are unanimous in approving. Never doubt your own purity. Believe that I am firmly yours, and that Harriet and Eliza determine that you shall be ours.

Adieu. Depend upon it that no one *can* have read our letters. Mrs. P. has been pumping you, and then drenching you with the water. You are not their equal in cunning. Well, adieu; time howls.

Your most sincere and true

[Addressed outside],  
Miss HITCHENER,  
Hurstpierpoint,  
Brighton, Sussex.

137. TO MR. HITCHENER  
(Brighton)

NANTGWILLT, RHAYADER, RADNORSHIRE, SOUTH WALES,  
April 30, 1812.

SIR,

I am your daughter's friend, of whom you may have heard her speak. You will consider it a sufficient introduction when *her* peace of mind is the subject of this intrusion. The late letters which I have received from my friend have evinced considerable distress of mind arising from reports circulated to the disadvantage of her reputation, which reports appear not to be without connexion with me, and my little circle. It was not until we had determined on the plan of living together, of pursuing conjointly those avocations for which we had severally acquired a taste, that any of these calumnies reached her ear, and they would have passed unnoticed by her and me in the silence of merited contempt, if some unaccountable infatuation had not gained them a sufficient degree of credit from you, to disapprove of the plan on which we had determined. —Sir, *my* moral character is unimpeached, and unimpeachable, I hate not calumny so much as I despise it. What the world thinks of my actions ever has, and I trust ever will, be a matter of the completest indifference. Your daughter shares this sentiment with me, and we both are resolved to refer our actions to one tribunal only, that which Nature has implanted within us. I am married. My wife loves your daughter, she laughs at whatever the scandal of a few gossips out of employment might whisper, nor is she willing to sacrifice the inestimable society of her friend to the good opinion of the good people of Hurst or Horsham at tea party or card table assembled. So far as myself and Mrs. Shelley are concerned, we are irrevocably resolved that no expedient shall be left untried on *our* part to induce our friend to share the prosperity or adversity of her lot with us. Much as the strong affection which she

bears you has prejudiced me in your favour, yet I would take my own opinion, particularly when it springs from my own reasonings and feelings, before that of any man. And you will forfeit the esteem that I have thus acquired for your character, if you endeavour by parental command to change the decision of [a] free-born soul. I understand that there is woven in the composition of your character a jealous watchfulness over the encroachments of those who happen to be born to more wealth and name than yourself. You are perhaps right. It need not be exerted now. I have no taste for displaying genealogies, nor do I wish to seem more important than I am.

Yours sincerely,

P. B. SHELLEY.

Mr. HITCHENER,  
Friar's Oak,  
Brighton, Sussex.

138. TO ELIZABETH HITCHENER

(Hurstpierpoint)

NANTGWILLT, [RHAYADER,  
RADNORSHIRE,]

Friday Even., [May 1, 1812].

Harriet still continues ill. I have sent for the nearest Physician (40 miles from this place) and as he is not yet arrived, shall send again to-morrow. Her indisposition has begun to wear so serious an appearance that, tho' not alarmed, I am anxious, as, without any visible cause, any violent fever or relaxations, her weakness has increased so much that she cannot walk across the room without assistance. A week ago I said: "Give me Nantgwillt; fix me in this spot so retired, so lovely, so fit for the seclusion of those who think and feel. Fate, I ask no more." Little *then* did I expect my Harriet's illness, or that flaming opposition which the mischievous and credulous around you are preparing against the most cherished wishes of my heart. Now I say: "Fate, give my Harriet health, give my *Portia* peace, and I will excuse



the remainder of my requisition." Oh my beloved friend, let not the sweet cup be dashed from the lips of those who alone can appreciate its luxury, at the instant that Fate has yielded it to their power! I have longer arguments than this expostulation in store. Yet surely this comprehends them. Does not joy include the good which we would do?

Well, my dear friend, Harriet will recover: oh, certainly she will! Her illness is of a nature comparatively slight, and I am weak to think so gloomily of it as I do sometimes. Yet she has been ill a week. *Then* I try to console myself:—How many weeks has not this frame tossed on a bed of bodily pain, with a mind scarcely less diseased than the body! Amongst all my thoughts, you are not forgotten: Friend of my soul, you are not forgotten. You are to my fancy as a thunder-riven pinnacle of rock, firm amid the rushing tempest and the boiling surge; Aye! stand for ever firm, *and*, when our ship anchors close to thee, the crew will cover thee with flowers! Well, to the point.—I have written to my uncle, and written to your Father: ask them to show the letters.—Harriet is so languid that she can scarcely speak; yet she *did* bid me to say that she hoped nothing would induce you to desert us, and to declare that she was irrevocably convinced that we ought all to live together. What! Are there beings on this world who think and feel as we do, and should the bigots to world-religion (for I can call by no better name the God that inspired the Captain's arguments, and your father's claims), should they enchain the "souls whose valour made them free?" I can think with no patience, my toleration to the hateful race of vipers that crawl upon this earth is exhausted, when I find that they have stung thee. There is a charm against their venom which thou, my friend, hast borne about thee—which thou bearest about thee still—which thou wilt ever bear. Repose thy perfect confidence in me: *I* cannot confide in a being *more* than I do in thee. I never admit it to be possible

that you are other than I have seen and known thee. I esteem, revere and love every part of your character. My Harriet's attachment to you will *even* exceed mine. She is warmer and more affectionate than my heart, which in its time, has had so much rubbing that it ought to be hard by this time. Your father and the Captain are near you, we are far : and yet, my friend, when you hear *their* arguments, persuasions, and threats, I think you sometimes turn your mind towards us, and ask, "What would Percy's little circle think of this ? What would they say ?"

Adieu. You will hear from me at greater length, as I have much to say, and much to answer.

Yours indissolubly,

P. B. S.

[Addressed outside],

Miss HITCHENER,

Hurstpierpoint,

Brighton, Sussex.

[Postmark], May 2, 1812.

### 139. TO ELIZABETH HITCHENER

(Hurstpierpoint)"

NANTGWILLT, [RHAYADER, RADNORSHIRE.]

May 7, 1812.

Harriet is much recovered. Her fever has left her, and she will, to-morrow or next day, inform you herself of her convalescence. Do *you* keep up your spirits, new-string your resolutions, and all will go well.

"But screw your courage to the sticking-place,  
And we'll *not* fail."

Your letter from Cuckfield to Harriet in Dublin has this day arrived. And so our dear friends are *determined to destroy our peace of mind* if we live together ; determined, all for our good, to make us *all* the most miserable wretches on earth. Now this it must be confessed is truly humane and condescending. But how is it to be managed ? Where will they begin ? In what manner will they destroy our peace of mind, without eradicating that conscious integrity whence it springs ? Thinking the pickaxe of vulgar

cunning, however sharp, not equal to the demolition of the noblest tree in the forest of the soul, we may, I assume, pass over the consideration of damage that cannot be effected. And what new thing have they advanced to shake this cherished plan? That you are to be *my Mistress!* that you refused it whilst I was single, but that my marriage takes away all objections that before stood in the way of this singular passion! They certainly seem to have acquired a taste of fabricating the most whimsical and impossible crimes. Whence, for instance, could they have taken (but from the annals of Centaurs and chimæras,) the idea of a passion whose delicacy shrank from the idea of union with its unengaged object, but whose timid scruples were completely overcome when that object was the husband of another? Trust me, my friend, they are the extemporaneous effusions of Mrs. Pilfold's brain, fertile in instant expedients, prepared to tell a thousand falsehoods to support an untruth at first perhaps unthinkingly advanced. These shapeless and undigested charges bear all the marks of her ever-ready calumny, which would hold out the right hand in affection, and with the left tear your very heartstrings! *She* is the woman! Now, my friend, are we or are we not to sacrifice an attachment in which far more than you and I are immediately implicated,—in which far more than these dear beings are remotely concerned? And to sacrifice to what? To the *world!* to the swinish multitude, to the indiscriminating million, to such as burnt the House of Priestley, such as murdered Fitzgerald, such as erect Barracks in Marylebone, such as began and such as continue this liberticide war, such wretches as dragged Redfern to slavery, or (equal in unprincipled cowardice) the slaves who permit such things: for of these two classes is composed what may be called the *world*.<sup>1</sup> But, my beloved friend, the good

<sup>1</sup> Joseph Priestley (1733-1804), natural philosopher and theologian, whose reply to Burke's "Reflections on the French Revolution," 1793, led to a Birmingham riot, during which his house was

will not rail at us. *They* will not say we are the slaves of contemptible passions—we who aspire to the eminence which *they* have gained—*Godwin* will not say so—In fine that conscience which [is] seated on a throne above the restless turbulence of interested feelings will acquit at its tribunal actions and thoughts incapable of sullyng its purity.

Are we, or are we not to sacrifice the immediate energizing of those reforms which the thoughtless and the every-day beings cannot conceive of as practicable or useful?—to sacrifice these plans, ideas communicated, ameliorated, and passed thro' the fire of *unbiassed* discussions—those plans which your soul cannot help bursting now to realize. And sacrificed to *what*? Eternal Truth, wherefore do I libel thy immutable name by holding this argument any longer with the most impassioned and unbending of thy votaries?

My friend, my dearest friend, you must—you shall—be with us, all our schemes, even of walks or rides, will be unfinished without you. Every day, every hour, that I discuss your coming, the good that will result appears more certain, and its opportunities more frequent, the evil vanishes.—For tell me one evil that will result, think of *one* good which your residence with us will not have a tendency to accomplish. Now you say that you will first visit us. Do so, and let this morning's visit [usher] in the day of endless being; at least, last as long as this life. Consider how little it is, in comparison to the eternal changes which await to commence at our dissolution.—

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wrecked by the mob, and most of his papers and instruments were destroyed. Lord Edward Fitzgerald (1763-1798) was one of the United Irishmen. He went to France to assist in the invasion of Ireland, and on his return was wounded while being arrested, and died a few days afterwards of his injuries. In the House of Commons on March 13th, 1812, it was stated that the new [Marylebone] Barracks in Regent's Park were to cost £138,000. A sum of £13,800,000 had been expended on the erection of barracks since the commencement of the war in the Peninsula in 1809.



Consider how foolish it would be, were you to pay a morning visit to Miss Weekes, or any other country gossip, and ran twenty times out of the room because it was *proper*. Now *determine* on nothing until this summer visit, but how can your resolves be unbiassed, if you propose to take your scholars again? Dismiss them, then, at Midsummer, and come to us, undetermined and open to conviction.

We are not yet settled in this place. The size of the residence, with respect to the number of bedrooms, is very desirable. How many amiable beings may not be destined to occupy them! We have already determined on your apartment: I think you will come.

I wrote to your father and to the Captain. The Captain told me that the reports were as you have stated them to be. He professed to disbelieve the "Mistress" business, but asserted that I certainly was very much attached to you. I certainly should feel quite as much inclined to deny my own existence as to deny this latter charge; altho' I took care to assure him that, in the vague sense which he had annexed to the word "*love*," he was utterly mistaken. I have answered this letter of his. When you see him, request to look at the correspondence. I have only one copy (and that torn) of Redfern's letter: I enclose it. It is a horrible case.

Tell me in your next how your political affairs get on. Who are your agents? What have you done? Take care of letting any of the "Declarations" get into the hands of priests or aristocrats. Adieu: bear in mind our love—Harriet's, mine, and Eliza's. Steel your heart to the poisoned-shafts of calumny: let them rebound from the adamantine rock. Ever beloved friend, adieu.

Your most truly and unalterably,

P. B. S.

[Addressed outside],  
Miss HITCHENER,  
Hurstpierpoint,  
Brighton, Sussex.

## 140. TO CATHERINE NUGENT

(Dublin)

NANTGWILT, RHAYADER, RADNORSHIRE, NORTH WALES,

May 7, 1812.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Harriet is now recovering from an intermittent brought on by the fatigues of our journey. I have been considerably anxious about her tho' I have no doubt but that in a short time she will be able to thank you for your kind letter, and inform you herself of her convalescence. Your letter arrived yesterday morning. Accept our sincerest united thanks, for tho' you are Harriet's correspondent, remember that you were first my friend. I shall not readily forget the greatness of mind on your part that presented me with a knowledge of you.

How unequally has the detestable system by which human beings govern their affairs distributed poverty and wealth. How much do you suffer from the distribution. Had you the millions which the Prince will possess how would England not be benefited! were *he* compelled to sit in Mr. Newman's shop and sew fur on to satin,<sup>1</sup> in what would she be injured? That this remark is not meant for flattery you will believe. No, your opinion of your own abilities is far too low. With regard to the notions you may have framed of abstract perfection, I know not how true or how false your opinion of yourself may be; but this I know, that with regard to what human nature *is*, your character is formed to excite that esteem and attachment which our little party feels for you.

I fear that hunger is the only excitement of our English riotings; any change which they may produce appears to me likely to be devoid of principle and method. I sincerely hope that a just indignation against that crowned coward and villain the Prince does prevail, but I do not think that it has gained any strength. The local Militia,

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<sup>1</sup> Miss Nugent was employed in the shop of Mr. Newman, a furrier.



*From a photograph after the original cast in possession of  
Professor Dowden, by his kind permission*

CATHERINE NUGENT  
from a plaster cast taken after death





that body of soldiery nearest approaching and immediately mingling with the character of citizen, have been called out near Carlisle and other great towns to quell the populace. That the Government has dared to call the local [forces] into action appears to be an evidence that at least they do not think that disaffection to Government (except so far as directly connected with starvation) has any share in these tumults. War with America appears in a manner now inevitable. Ministers have been at some *ministerial* work in that country, viz., Capt. Henry and Sir [paper torn] Craig.<sup>1</sup> Redfern's letters have not yet been distributed. They were packed in a box which we left at Holyhead, but which we expect by the carrier to-night. Remember me to Reynolds; tell him I shall not be idle about Redfern, and that as soon as I have done anything I will write to him. We expect to take possession of this house and farm on Thursday next. Accept, my esteemed friend, from that time the sincerest welcome that our warm hearts can give you. Believe that if anything can add to the pleasure we shall receive from your visit it will be the earliness of the period which you fix for its commencement. With sincerest wishes for your peace and health, in which Harriet and Eliza join, believe me

Yours most truly,

P. B. SHELLEY.

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<sup>1</sup> General Sir James Henry Craig (1748-1812), formerly Governor of Canada, was supposed to have employed Captain John Henry "to go to Boston to find out how the minds of the People were then affected, and whether they would be inclined to break the Union." Great Britain and America were on the point of hostilities, and it appeared that Captain Henry had made the disclosure regarding his dead chief to the United States, alleging that the government authorities had refused to give him his due reward. Correspondence with Lord Liverpool and with Sir James Craig on the subject was referred to by President Madison in his message to the Houses of Congress, and questions were raised in the Houses of Lords and Commons. The British Government, while blaming the action of the late Sir James Craig, repudiated any responsibility in the steps he had taken. America, however, declared war with Great Britain on June 18, 1812.

Did you see Sir F. Burdett's speech on the Marylebone Barracks ?<sup>1</sup>

[Addressed outside],  
Mrs. NUGENT,  
No. 101 Grafton Street,  
Dublin, Ireland.

141. TO MR. HITCHENER  
(Brighton)

NANTGWILLT,  
May 14, 1812.

SIR,

If you have always considered *character* a possession of the first consequence you and I essentially differ. If you think that an admission of your inferiority to the world would leave any corner by which yourself and character may aspire beyond its reach, we differ there again. In short, to be candid, I am deceived in my conception of your character.—I had some difficulty in stifling an indignant surprise on reading the sentence of your letter in which *you* refuse my invitation to your daughter. How are you entitled to do this ? Who made you her governor ? did you receive this refusal from her to communicate to me ? No you have not——. How are *you* then constituted to answer a question which can only be addressed to *her* ? believe me such an assumption is as impotent as it is immoral. You may cause your daughter much anxiety, many troubles, you may stretch her on a bed of sickness, you may destroy her body, but you are defied to shake her mind.—She is now very ill. *You* have agitated her mind until her frame is seriously deranged ; take care, Sir, you may destroy her by disease, but her mind is free : *that*

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<sup>1</sup> Sir Francis Burdett's speech in the House of Commons on May 1st, 1812, regarding the question of erecting new barracks in Marylebone Park, in which he was called to order for "throwing a slur on the Army."

you cannot hurt.—Your ideas of *Propriety* (or to express myself clearer, of *morals*) are all founded on considerations of *profit*. I do not mean money, but profit in its extended sense :—as to your daughter's welfare on that *she* is competent to judge or at least she alone has a right to decide. With respect to your own compact you of course do right to consult it, that she has done so you ought to be more grateful than you appear.—But how can you demand as a right what has been generously conceded as a favor ; you do right to consult your own comfort, but the whole world besides may surely be excused.

Neither the laws of Nature, nor of England, have made children private property.

Adieu, when next I hear from you, I hope that time will have liberalized your sentiments.

Yours truly,  
P. B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],  
Mr. HITCHENER,  
Friar's Oak,  
Brighton, Sussex.

142. TO ELIZABETH HITCHENER  
(Hurstpierpoint)

NANTGWILLT, [RHAYADER,  
RADNORSHIRE],  
[Tuesday], June 2, 1812.

I have not written to you now for a fortnight ! What a time ! soon, however, we shall have a mode of communication more endearing, delightful and immediate. Nothing shall ever prevent our meeting. The opposition of the narrow-minded and worldly shall only render more speedy and decisive what they are now inefficient to hinder ! One fortnight more, and we meet ; fortnight

fly fast and leave the last of my wishes completed! I have been ill with an inflam[m]atory fever, from which I am now completely recovered. I feared to write to you with a hand unsteady, and a head disordered with illness. Harriet was delegated to the task, she is no unworthy substitute.

I rejoice to think that you, my dearest friend, will speedily be our eternal inmate. Rejoice, did I say? It is a word frigid and inexpressive of the idea which it is meant to excite.

I have much to talk to you of. Innate Passions, God, Christianity, etc., when we meet. Would not "co-existent with our organization" be a more correct phrase for passions than "innate?" I think I can prove to you that *our* God is the same. If every day takes from the fever of my opposition to Christianity, it adds to its system a determinedness, it adds to the perfect and full conviction I feel of its falsehood and mischief.—We are not yet *certain* of possessing Nantgwilt; it would provoke me to resign what I have intended to make the asylum of distressed virtue, the rendezvous of the friends of liberty and truth. On Friday, however, it will be fixed. I shall immediately furnish our largest room as a *Library*, for which I shall have credit on my future remaining prospects. I think this luxury is one that we are entitled to, if we are entitled to any advantage from our fortune, even if we put out of consideration the knowledge that a library will give us of building the house we shall possess for the benefit of the Human race. It will cost £50 to come to Hurst and return to Nantgwilt if everything proceeds quietly (as our union is by right, national right, the property of all the members of our society, of which you are henceforth considered as one). I think you had better come to Nantgwilt alone. If we cannot get Nantgwilt we shall come up to London before the 25th, where we shall meet you and shall be equally inseparably united. Time, place, and circumstance can now make no difference in our



meeting. You have been ill ; dearest friend take care of yourself—your life is inexpressibly valuable and important.

Adieu. You shall hear on Friday.

Your most faithful and affectionate

[Signature apparently torn off.]

[Addressed outside],

Miss HITCHENER,

Hurstpierpoint,

Brighton, Sussex.

[Postmark], 6 June, 1812.

#### 143. TO WILLIAM GODWIN

(London)

NANTGWILLT,

June 3, 1812.

MY DEAR SIR,

I hasten to dissipate the unfavourable impressions you seem to have received from my silence. Mrs. Godwin, in a letter to my wife, mentions the existence of *your* letter in Ireland. This I have never been able to recover ; indeed, I am confident that the date of your last was considerably anterior to the 30th of March.

My health has been far from good since I wrote to you, and I have been day after day tormented, and rendered anxious by the delay of legal business necessary to secure this house to us. I do not say that anything can absolutely excuse any neglect to you ; but the constant expectancy that the succeeding day would bring a train of thought more favourable than the present, together with your expected letter, may be permitted to palliate it.

I hope, my venerated friend, that you will soon permit the time to arrive when you may know me as I am—when you may consult those lineaments which cannot deceive—and be placed in a situation which will obviate the possibility of delusion.

I revert with pleasure to the latter part of your letter,<sup>1</sup> and entreat you to erase from your mind the impressions which occasioned the former. They shall never, assure yourself, find occasion of renewal. Until my marriage, my life had been a series of illness, as it was, of a nervous and spasmodic nature, which in a degree incapacitated me for study. I nevertheless, in the intervals of comparative health, read romances, and those the most marvellous ones, unremittingly, and pored over the reveries of Albertus Magnus and Paracelsus, the former of which I read in Latin, and probably gained more knowledge of that language from that source than from all the discipline of Eton. My fondness for natural magic and ghosts abated, as my age increased. I read Locke, Hume, Reid, and whatever metaphysics came in my way, without, however, renouncing poetry, an attachment to which has characterized all my wanderings and changes. I did not truly *think* and *feel*, however, until I read "Political Justice," though my thoughts and feelings, after this period, have been more painful, anxious and vivid—more inclined to action and less to theory. Before I was a republican: Athens appeared to me the model of governments; but afterwards, Athens bore in my mind the same relation to perfection that Great Britain did to Athens.

I fear that I am wanting in that mild and equable benevolence concerning which you question me; still I flatter myself that I improve: at all events, I have willingness, and "desire never fails to generate capacity." My knowledge of the chivalric age is small: do not conceive that I intend it to remain so. During my existence, I have incessantly speculated, thought, and read. A great

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<sup>1</sup> Godwin's letter of March 30, 1812, in which he refers to that part of Shelley's of March 24, where the young philanthropist says "I will look to events, in which it will be impossible I can share, or make myself the cause of an effect, which will take place ages after I have mouldered into dust." Godwin bids Shelley not to be discouraged, and tells him to "sow the seed, and after a season, and when you least look for it, it will germinate and produce a crop."

deal of this labour has been uselessly directed ; still I am willing to hope that some portion of the stores thus improvidently accumulated, will turn to account. I have just finished reading "La Système de la Nature,"<sup>1</sup> par M. Mirabaud. Do you know the real author ? It appears to me a work of uncommon powers.

I write this to you by return of post, solicitous, as quickly as possible, to reassure you of my fidelity and truth. I will soon write one more at length, and with answers more satisfactory to the questions in the latter part of yours.

Believe me, with sincerest respect,

Yours most truly,

P. B. SHELLEY.

To Mr. WILLIAM GODWIN, London.

#### 144. TO ELIZABETH HITCHENER

(Hurstpierpoint)

CWM ELAN,

[Saturday] June 6, 1812.

You see where we are. Nantgwillt is not ours, nor will it be.<sup>2</sup> Mrs. Hooper, the possessor, has chosen to quarrel

<sup>1</sup> This book was not by J. B. de Mirabaud, as it seems to imply ; he died shortly before its appearance, but by Baron D'Holbach (1723-1789), one of the French Encyclopaedists. It is sometimes attributed (without any apparent authority) to Helvétius. Professor Dowden suggests that Shelley may have been led to "Le Système de la Nature" (1770), "the extreme philosophical outcome of eighteenth-century materialism," by a mention of it in Godwin's "Political Justice." A long extract from the work is given among the notes to "Queen Mab." Edit. 1813, pp. 174-182.

<sup>2</sup> On the day following the date of this letter Harriet Shelley wrote as follows to Catherine Nugent on the subject of Nantgwillt—

Direct, CWM ELAN, RHAYADER, RADNORSHIRE, S[OUTH] W[ALES]

June 7 [1812].

MY DEAR MRS. NUGENT,—So long a time has passed since we have had the pleasure of hearing from you, that the various conjectures arising in our minds as to the cause required explanation. I am sure of this, should you chance to receive my letter. But in the meantime let me tell you all our disappointments. First, then, you will see from the date of this that we are not at our beloved Nantgwillt. Alas, that charming spot is, I am afraid, never destined to

with us because we cannot give satisfactory security ; and for a time (a very short one) we are resident at Mr. Grove's.—But you shall meet us, dear friend : all the varyings and fluctuations of every-day affairs shall leave our meeting unchangeable.—What ! may I not say that one is a moral, the other a physical, event—that one depends upon “ the virtuous will,” the other upon the changeable

be ours ! The possessor cannot settle with Percy, and indeed he has acted such a *villainous* part that we have been obliged to leave him, and for a few days take up our residence at Mr. Grove's, about a mile and half from our favourite residence. You may imagine our sorrow at leaving so desirable a spot, where every beauty seems centred. I had hoped to have seen you there ; but I'm afraid I must relinquish and with sorrow so fallacious a wish. We have some thoughts of going to Italy till Percy is of age, as the same difficulty will attend us wherever we go. One very great inducement to go to Italy is the warmth of the climate, as Percy's health is so extremely delicate that the cold air of this country is not likely to benefit him. What have you thought upon the murder of the Prime Minister ? Undoubtedly it was very distressing, but the man's composure is astonishing. I think he was a Methodist from his behaviour. I am sorry for his family. It had been better if they had killed Lord Castlereagh. He really deserved it ; but this poor Mr. P[ercival] I believe was a very good private character. Do you not think it nonsense for all the little towns and villages to send petitions to the Prince upon the occasion. I suppose Ireland has not done anything half so silly. How do your poor countrymen go on ? I hope things are not so scarce there as here. How very lovely the weather is now. Summer comes at last and with it brings disappointments, for you are not the only one I had hoped to have seen at Nantgwillt. Godwin's children were to come to us ; but our evil genius has stepped in and forbid us that happiness. We are to begin travelling again soon and where to bend our steps I know not ; but we think of going to the seaside until our passports come. We must remain here until we receive remittances from London. Percy is related to Mr. Grove, and his wife is a very pleasant woman, tho' too formal to be agreeable. He is a very proud man. Therefore you may guess how we pass our time. Do you ever see Mr. Lawless ? We hear from him sometimes. As to the poems I have no idea how and when they will come out. The printers are very slow in their operations. I must now conclude in hopes of hearing from you soon. Believe me your sincere affectionate friend.

H. S.

Percy and Eliza desire to be remembered.

[Addressed outside],

Mrs. NUGENT,

No. 101 Grafton Street,

Dublin, Ireland.



impressions of sensuality?—But to the point.—Do not fear that my father will withdraw the allowance. I know the hidden springs of his character ; and pride would not suffer him to withdraw what pride only actuated him to give.—I have sent a draft to town by to-day's post for the quarterly £50, which shall take us to London, where we will meet with you, or at Hurst as you think fit ; when we shall become *inseparable*, and will talk over all the plans which float in all our brains as to our future manner of life. As to your house being on the terms you describe, I do not see anything peremptory in that. If we think it most conducive to unselfishness to fix on it as a residence, undoubtedly we will fix there without hesitation. But might not both your and my connexions considerably curtail our exertions ? Might not our central situation with relation to all our *well-meaning* enemies expose us and our views continually to their aggressions, which, contemptible as they might be with respect to our own peace of mind, would assume an entirely different aspect with regard to our usefulness ? Might not my father, offended in our residence in Sussex, withdraw his allowance ? Might not the Captain think a well-directed hostility effectual towards disuniting us ? Might not your father, lastly, led on by the unculture of his mind, form conclusions of the utmost asperity and injustice ? These are considerations which tho' not presenting insurmountable obstacles, are yet subjects for consideration at our meeting.

Adieu. I write in haste, and shall answer your letter the day after to-morrow. Dearest friend, this is a letter of business. Adieu. We all unite in love to her whom we all love inexpressibly.

Your

P. B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],  
Miss HITCHENER,  
Hurstpierpoint,  
Brighton, Sussex.  
[Postmark], June 9, 1812.

145. TO ELIZABETH HITCHENER  
(Hurstpierpoint)

CWM ELAN,

June 11, 1812.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

The news of your postscript does not much surprise me. It was to have been expected that no means would have [been] left unattempted by the genius of intrigue and malice. You must know that I regard charges of resembling Lovelace with contemptuous indifference. They affect me but on one account: I fear they have an ill effect on *you*.—But I should expect that they would excite in you only a smile of bitterness and unbelief.

We cannot have Nantgwillt, and are now remaining at Mr. Grove's until remittances enable us to move. The expenses with which our board, lodging, etc., have been attended, will leave us possessed of a sum not sufficient to undertake a journey into Sussex, compatibly with independence when we arrive.—You know, my friend, how much each of us regrets the necessity that detains us from instantly flying to you: but you likewise know that nothing but an unconquerable necessity interposes between friendship and its duties. We therefore determine to proceed to Ilfracombe, a town in the north of Devonshire, sixty miles from Rhayader. We shall at all events get lodgings there for the present; and there is a Coach from London to Barnstaple, which is close to Ilfracombe, by which you may be quickly conveyed to those whose bosoms throb for your arrival.—*Our* journey to Ilfracombe cannot exceed £8: our journey to Sussex must at least be £30. With the difference of these two sums a house is procurable at Ilfracombe, or near it, which shall be the sanctuary of happiness. As soon as you can arrange your affairs, take a place in the coach for London, Mr. Westbrook will give you a bed, and the next morning he will see you safe in the Barnstaple coach.

Have you enough money for the journey? If not, write to us, and we will send [some] as soon as the £50 arrives. If possible, however, do not wait for the intervention of another letter and its answer. Our *well-meaning* enemies are determined to oppose your departure with every kind of method—take *your* method of defeating them: let it be plain and simple.—There is no necessity either to conceal or make public your departure: I recommend not secrecy, but calm firmness.

[Written by Harriet]

DEAREST FRIEND,

Your letter makes me very happy as I think I may count upon seeing you very soon. I wish I could come to you, but fate has willed that we should meet at Ilfracombe w[h]ither we shall hasten as soon as the means are ours. For the present I am tied Leg and Wing by the chains of —? to this enchanting place. Keep up your spirits and let not the whisperings of envy and malice deter you from so happy an undertaking, be firm and determined. I would come if I could, and that I could not expect. God bless you and enable you to *arrive*.

[Addressed outside],

single sheet,

Miss HITCHENER,

Hurstpierpoint,

Brighton, Sussex.

[Postmark], June 13, 1812.

#### 146. TO WILLIAM GODWIN

(London)

CWM-RHAYADER,

June 11, 1812.

MY DEAR SIR,

I will no longer delay returning my grateful and cordial acknowledgments for your inestimable letter of March 30. That it is most affectionate and kind, I deeply feel and thankfully confess. I can return no other answer, than

that I will become all that you believe and wish me to be. I should regard it as my greatest glory, should I be judged worthy to solace your declining years ; it is a pleasure, the realization of which I anticipate with confident hopes, and which it shall be my study to deserve. I will endeavour to subdue the impatience of my nature, so incompatible with true benevolence.

I know that genuine philanthropy does not permit its votaries to relax, even when hope appears to languish, or to indulge bitterness of feeling against the very worst, the most mistaken of men.

To these faults in a considerable degree I plead guilty ; at all events, I have now a stimulus adequate to excite me to the conquest of them.

I yet know little of the chivalric age. The ancient romances in which are depicted the manners of those times, never fell in my way. I have read Southey's " Amadis of Gaul " and " Palmerin of England," but at a time when I was little disposed to philosophize on the manners they describe. I have also read his " Chronicle of the Cid." It is written in a simple and impressive style, and surprised me by the extent of accurate reading evinced by the references. But I read it hastily, and it did not please me, so much as it will on a reperusal, seasoned by your authority and opinion. It requires no great study to attain an intimate knowledge of Grecian and Roman history ; it requires but common feeling to appreciate and acknowledge the resplendent virtues with which it is replete. The first doubts, which arose in my boyish mind concerning the genuineness of the Christian religion, as a revelation from the divinity, were excited by a contemplation of the virtues and genius of Greece and Rome. Shall Socrates and Cicero perish, whilst the meanest hind of modern England inherits eternal life ?

I mean not to affirm that this is the first argument with which I would combat the delusions of superstition ; but it certainly was the first that operated to convince me



that they were delusions. What do you think of Eaton's trial and sentence? I mean not to insinuate that this poor bookseller has any characteristics in common with Socrates, or Jesus Christ, still the spirit which pillories and imprisons him is the same which brought them to an untimely end—still, even in this enlightened age, the moralist and reformer may expect coercion analogous to that used with the humble yet zealous imitator of their endeavours. I have thought of addressing the public on the subject, and indeed have begun an outline of the address.<sup>1</sup> May I be favoured with your remarks on it before I send it to the world?

We are unexpectedly compelled to quit Nantgwilt. I hope, however, before long time has elapsed, to find a house. These accidents are unavoidable to a minor. I hope wherever we are, you, Mrs. Godwin, and your children will come this summer.

I do not suppose we shall remain here longer than a week. All letters directed here will securely and certainly be forwarded. Harriet desires to join me in everything that is respectful and affectionate to yourself, Mrs. G., and family, my venerated friend. Believe me to remain yours most sincerely,

P. B. SHELLEY.

To Mr. WILLIAM GODWIN, London.

#### 146A. TO ELIZABETH HITCHENER

June [18, 1812.]

We shall come at any rate. Something on which we cannot calculate has happened: means utterly unknown to us have been practised upon you. Friendship and justice command that we should do all that can be done—I hope the time will never come when we shall be deaf to

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<sup>1</sup> It took the form of "A letter to Lord Ellenborough," etc. See Shelley's letter to Hookham, July 29, 1812.

their appeals.—I calculate that, on our arrival at Chepstow, £13 will remain. This may suffice for our journey by coaches across the country to you. *Then* we shall be penniless, and for our return to Chepstow where Eliza will remain, depend upon your exertions with Mr. H[owell]. You had better mention my responsibility, which, if I can see Mr. Howell when I come, I will personally give. Affairs have now arrived at a crisis. I perceive by your letter the necessity of our journey, it is playing a momentous game. It demands coolness and resolution—such coolness as contempt for our adversaries has given Harriet and me. Calm yourself, collect yourself, my dearest friend. How little ought the commonplace cant of prejudice to affect you. How little ought your mighty soul to be shaken by the whisper of a worldling!

Let us show that truth can conquer falsehood.—Let us show that prejudice is impotent when the resolution of friendship and virtue is awakened. It is a glorious cause: martyrdom in such a cause were superior than victory in any other. If what Mr. and Mrs. P[ilfold] and Co, have said of me had been, as it will be, unconnected with your peace, it would amuse me excessively. Even now I can sometimes not help smiling, though the smile is a bitter one, when the train of their conspiracies comes across me.

About next Thursday you may expect us. I am not positive as to the day, but next week we shall be with you. Prepare yourself to leave a scene rendered hateful by impotent malice. If you can [procure] no money, I should conceive that *my* attempts would not be quite unsuccessful. I know not, however, how this may be. Money is our *slave*, not our master: it is a slave whose services we are all equally entitled to command. The best wishes, the sincerest love, of all, await you until we meet.

Yours unalterably,

P. B. SHELLEY.

Even if we are gone, Eliza will be there. You may direct to the Post Office at Chepstow.

I think that you had better communicate to *no one* the contents of this letter. It could answer no good purpose, and might engender in Mrs. P[ilfold]'s brain some new scheme of malice.

I have been writing a defence of Eaton. To-day I have not coolness enough to go on.

[Addressed outside],

Miss HITCHENER,

Hurstpierpoint,

Brighton, Sussex.

[Postmark], 22 June, 1812.

#### 147. TO LORD ELLENBOROUGH<sup>1</sup>

[June, 1812.]

MY LORD,

As the station to which you have been called by your country is important, so much the more awful is your

<sup>1</sup> A Letter / to / Lord Ellenborough, / occasioned by the Sentence which he passed on / Mr. D. I. Eaton, / as Publisher of / The Third Part of Paine's "Age of Reason." / Deorum offensa, Diis curae. / "It is contrary to the mild spirit of the Christian Religion, for no / sanction can be found under that dispensation which will warrant a / Government to impose disabilities and penalties upon any man, on / account of his religious opinions." [*Hear, Hear.*] / Marquis Wellesley's Speech. *Globe*, July 2. / This letter was printed at Barnstaple by Mr. Style; see Mr. J. R. Chanter's "Sketches of the Literary History of Barnstaple, 1866," p. 55. Most of the copies of the pamphlet were destroyed by Mr. Style on examining its contents, but seventy-five copies were sent by Shelley to Hookham. Only one copy is at present known to have survived, namely that which was preserved by Hookham and which passed from him to Sir Percy Shelley; it is now in the Bodleian Library. The pamphlet was not published; a revised portion was afterwards included as a note to "Queen Mab," and Lady Shelley printed some extracts in her "Shelley Memorials." It remained for Mr. H. Buxton Forman to give the first verbatim reprint of the Letter in his excellent edition of Shelley's Prose Works, 1880, Vol. I, p. 403. "Daniel Isaac Eaton, a bookseller of Ave Maria Lane, London, was in March, 1812, prosecuted by the Court of King's Bench for publishing, at his 'Ratiocinatory, or Magazine for Truth and Good Sense,' a blasphemous and profane libel on the Holy Scriptures, entitled 'The Age of

responsibility, so much the more does it become you to watch lest you inadvertently punish the virtuous and reward the vicious.

You preside over a Court which is instituted for the suppression of crime, and to whose authority the people submit on no other conditions than that its decrees should be conformable to justice.

If it should be demonstrated that a judge had condemned an innocent man, the bare existence of laws in conformity to which the accused is punished would but little extenuate his offence. The inquisitor, when he burns an obstinate heretic, may set up a similar plea ; yet few are sufficiently blinded by intolerance to acknowledge its validity. It will less avail such a judge to assert the policy of punishing one who has committed no crime. Policy and morality ought to be deemed synonymous in a court of justice, and he whose conduct has been regulated by the latter principle, is not justly amenable to any penal law for a supposed violation of the former. It is true, my Lord, laws exist which suffice to screen you from the animadversion of any constituted power, in consequence of the unmerited sentence which you have passed upon Mr. Eaton ; but there are no laws which screen you from the reproof of a nation's disgust, none which ward off the just judgment of posterity, if that posterity will deign to recollect you.

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Reason : Part the Third. By Thomas Paine.' He was found guilty, and Lord Ellenborough sentenced him on May 8 to eighteen months' imprisonment at Newgate, and during the first month to stand in the pillory for an hour in the Old Bailey. On May 26, amid the waving of hats and cheering of the crowd, Eaton, then upwards of sixty, underwent his public punishment, and not a voice or arm was raised against him." Prof. Dowden's " Shelley," Vol. I, p. 289. In 1793 Eaton had been indicted for selling the Second Part of Paine's " Rights of Man," and again in 1794 for a supposed libel on George III in " Politics for the People," but was acquitted. He sought a refuge in America, but was outlawed in 1796. He translated from the French, and published in 1810 Baron d'Holbach's " The True Sense and Meaning of the System of Nature." In 1813 he was tried for publishing " Ecce Homo," but owing to his age, he was not brought up for judgment. He died in 1814.



By what right do you punish Mr. Eaton ? What but antiquated precedents, gathered from times of priestly and tyrannical domination, can be adduced in palliation of an outrage so insulting to humanity and justice ? Whom has he injured ? What crime has he committed ? Wherefore may he not walk abroad like other men, and follow his accustomed pursuits ? What end is proposed in confining this man, charged with the commission of no dishonourable action ? Wherefore did his aggressor avail himself of popular prejudice, and return no answer but one of commonplace contempt to a defence of plain and simple sincerity ? Lastly, when the prejudices of the jury as Christians, were strongly and unfairly inflamed<sup>1</sup> against this injured man, as a Deist, wherefore did not you, my Lord, check such unconstitutional pleading, and desire the jury to pronounce the accused innocent or criminal<sup>2</sup> without reference to the particular faith which he professed ?

In the name of justice, what answer is there to these questions ? The answer which Heathen Athens made to Socrates is the same with which Christian England must attempt to silence the advocates of this injured man. " He has questioned established opinions." Alas ! the crime of inquiry is one which religion never has forgiven. Implicit faith and fearless inquiry have in all ages been irreconcilable enemies. Unrestrained philosophy has in every age opposed itself to the reveries of credulity and fanaticism. The truths of astronomy demonstrated by Newton have superseded astrology ; since the modern discoveries in chemistry, the philosopher's stone has been deemed attainable. Miracles of every kind have become rare in proportion to the hidden principles which those who study nature have developed. That which is false will ultimately be controverted by its own falsehood. That which is true needs but publicity to be acknowledged.

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<sup>1</sup> See the Attorney-General's Speech.—(S.)

<sup>2</sup> By Mr. Fox's bill (1791) juries are, in cases of libel, judges both of the law and the fact.—(S.)

It is ever a proof that the falsehood of a proposition is felt by those who use power and coercion, not reasoning and persuasion, to procure its admission. Falsehood skulks in holes and corners, "it lets I dare not wait upon I would," like the poor cat in the adage," except when it has power, and then, as it was a coward, it is a tyrant ; but the eagle-eye of truth darts thro' the undazzling sunbeam of the immutable and just, gathering there wherewith to vivify and illuminate a universe !

Wherefore, I repeat, is Mr. Eaton punished ? Because he is a Deist. And what are you, my Lord ? A Christian. Ha, then ! the mask has fallen off ; you persecute him because his faith differs from yours. You copy the persecutors of Christianity in your actions, and are an additional proof that your religion is as bloody, barbarous, and intolerant as theirs. If some Deistical bigot in power (supposing such a character for the sake of illustration) should in dark and barbarous ages have enacted a statute making the profession of Christianity criminal ; if you, my Lord, were a Christian bookseller, and Mr. Eaton a Judge, those arguments which you consider adequate to justify yourself for the sentence you have passed must likewise suffice, in the suppositionary case, to justify Mr. Eaton in sentencing you to Newgate and the pillory for being a Christian. Whence is any right derived, but that which power confers, for persecution ? Do you think to convert Mr. Eaton to your religion by embittering his existence ? You might force him by torture to profess your tenets, but he could not believe them, except you should make them credible, which perhaps exceeds your power. Do you think to please the God you worship by this exhibition of your zeal ? If so, the Demon to whom some nations offer human hecatombs is less barbarous than the Deity of civilised society.

You consider man as an accountable being—but he can only be accountable for those actions which are influenced by his will.

Belief and disbelief are utterly distinct from and unconnected with volition. They are the apprehension of the agreement or disagreement of the ideas which compose any proposition. Belief is an involuntary operation of the mind, and, like other passions, its intensity is purely proportionate to the degrees of excitement. Volition is essential to merit or demerit. How, then, can merit or demerit be attached to what is distinct from that faculty of the mind whose presence is essential to their being? I am aware that religion is founded on the voluntariness of belief, as it makes it a subject of regard and punishment; but before we extinguish the steady ray of reason and common sense, it is fit that we should discover, which we cannot do without their assistance, whether or no there be any other which may suffice to guide us through the labyrinth of life.

If the law *de hæretico comburendo* had not been formally repealed, I conceive that, from the promise held out by your Lordship's zeal, we need not despair of beholding the flames of persecution rekindled in Smithfield. Even now the lash that drove Descartes and Voltaire from their native country, the chains which bound Galileo, the flames which burned Vanini, again resound:—And where? in a nation that presumptuously calls itself the sanctuary of freedom. Under a government which, whilst it infringes the very right of thought and speech, boasts of permitting the liberty of the press, a man is pilloried and imprisoned because he is a Deist, and no one raises his voice in the indignation of outraged humanity. Does the Christian God, whom his followers eulogize as the Deity of humility and peace—He, the regenerator of the world, the meek reformer—authorise one man to rise against another, and, because lictors are at his beck, to chain and torture him as an Infidel?

When the Apostles went abroad to convert the nations, were they enjoined to stab and poison all who disbelieved the divinity of Christ's mission; assuredly, they would



have been no more justifiable in this case than he is at present who puts into execution the law which inflicts pillory and imprisonment on the Deist.

Has not Mr. Eaton an equal right to call your Lordship an Infidel as you have to imprison him for promulgating a different doctrine from that which you profess! What do I say? Has he not even a stronger plea? The word *Infidel* can only mean anything when applied to a person who professes that which he disbelieves. The test of truth is an undivided reliance on its inclusive powers; the test of conscious falsehood is the variety of the forms under which it presents itself, and its tendency towards employing whatever coercive means may be within its command, in order to procure the admission of what is unsusceptible of support from reason or persuasion. A dispassionate observer would feel himself more powerfully interested in favor of a man, who, depending on the truth of his opinions, simply stated his reasons for entertaining them, than in that of his aggressor, who, daringly avowing his unwillingness or incapacity to answer them by argument, proceeded to repress the energies and break the spirit of their promulgator by that torture and imprisonment whose infliction he could command.

I hesitate not to affirm that the opinions which Mr. Eaton sustained, when undergoing that mockery of a trial, at which your Lordship presided, appear to me more true and good than those of his accuser; but were they false as the visions of a Calvinist, it still would be the duty of those who love liberty and virtue to raise their voice indignantly against a reviving system of persecution—against the coercively repressing any opinion, which, if false, needs but the opposition of truth; which, if true, in spite of force must ultimately prevail.

Mr. Eaton asserted that the scriptures were, from beginning to end, a fable and imposture,<sup>1</sup> that the Apostles were

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<sup>1</sup> See the Attorney-General's speech (Shelley's note).



liars and deceivers. He denied the miracle, the resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ. He did so ; and the Attorney-General denied the proposition which he asserted, and asserted that which he denied. What singular conclusion is deducible from this fact ? None, but that the Attorney-General and Mr. Eaton sustained two opposite opinions. The Attorney-General puts some obsolete and tyrannical laws in force against Mr. Eaton, because he publishes a book tending to prove that certain supernatural events, which are supposed to have taken place eighteen centuries ago, in a remote corner of the world, did not actually take place. But how is the truth or falsehood of the facts in dispute relevant to the merit or demerit attachable to the advocates of the two opinions ? No man is accountable for his belief, because no man is capable of directing it. Mr. Eaton is therefore totally blameless. What are we to think of the justice of a sentence which punishes an individual against whom it is not even attempted to attach the slightest stain of criminality ?

It is asserted that Mr. Eaton's opinions are calculated to subvert morality. How ? What moral truth is spoken of with irreverence or ridicule in the book which he published ? Morality, or the duty of a man and citizen, is founded on the relations which arise from the association of human beings, and which vary with the circumstances produced by the different states of this association. This duty, in similar situations, must be precisely the same in all ages and nations. The opinion contrary to this has arisen from a supposition that the will of God is the source or criterion of morality. It is plain that the utmost exertion of Omnipotence could not cause that to be virtuous which actually is vicious. An all-powerful Demon might, indubitably, annex punishments to virtue and rewards to vice, but could not by these means effect the slightest change in their abstract and immutable natures. Omnipotence could vary, by a providential interposition, the relations of human society ; in this latter case, what before

was virtuous would become vicious, according to the necessary and natural result of the alteration ; but the abstract natures of the opposite principles would have sustained not the slightest change. For instance, the punishment with which society restrains the robber, the assassin, and the ravisher, is just, laudable, and requisite. We admire and respect the institutions which curb those who would defeat the ends for which society was established ; but, should a precisely similar coercion be exercised against one merely who expressed his disbelief of a system admitted by those entrusted with the executive power, using at the same time no methods of promulgation but those afforded by reason, certainly this coercion would be eminently inhuman and immoral ; and the supposition that any revelation from an unknown power avails to palliate a persecution so senseless, unprovoked, and indefensible, is at once to destroy the barrier which reason places between vice and virtue, and leave to unprincipled fanaticism a plea whereby it may excuse every act of frenzy which its own wild passions, and the inspirations of the Deity, have engendered.

Moral qualities are such as only a human being can possess. To attribute them to the Spirit of the Universe, or to suppose that it is capable of altering them, is to degrade God into man, and to annex to this incomprehensible Being qualities incompatible with any *possible definition of its nature*. It may be here objected :—Ought not the Creator to possess the perfections of the creature ? No. To attribute to God the moral qualities of man, is to suppose him susceptible of passions, which, arising out of corporeal organisation, it is plain that a pure Spirit cannot possess. A bear is not perfect except he is rough, a tiger is not perfect if he be not voracious, an elephant is not perfect if otherwise than docile. How *deep* an argument must not that be which proves that the Deity is as rough as a bear, as voracious as a tiger, and as docile as an elephant. But even suppose, with the vulgar, that God is a

venerable old man, seated on a throne of clouds, his breast the theatre of various passions analogous to those of humanity, his will changeable and uncertain as that of an earthly king ; still, goodness and justice are qualities seldom nominally denied him, and it will be admitted that he disapproves of any action incompatible with those qualities. Persecution for opinion is unjust. With what consistency, then, can the worshippers of a Deity whose benevolence they boast embitter the existence of their fellow being, because his ideas of that Deity are different from those which they entertain ? Alas ! there is no consistency in those persecutors who worship a benevolent Deity ; those who worship a Demon would alone act consonantly to these principles by imprisoning and torturing in his name.

Persecution is the only name applicable to punishment inflicted on an individual in consequence of his opinions. What end is persecution designed to answer ? Can it convince him whom it injures ? Can it prove to the people the falsehood of his opinions ? It may make *him* a hypocrite and *them* cowards ; but bad means can promote no good end. The unprejudiced mind looks with suspicion on a doctrine that needs the sustaining hand of power.

Socrates was poisoned because he dared to combat the degrading superstitions in which his countrymen were educated. Not long after his death Athens recognised the injustice of his sentence ; his accuser, Melitus, was condemned, and Socrates became a demigod.

Jesus Christ was crucified because he attempted to supersede the ritual of Moses with regulations more moral and humane—his very judge made public acknowledgment of his innocence, but a bigoted and ignorant mob demanded the deed of horror—Barabbas the murderer and traitor was released. The meek reformer Jesus was immolated to the sanguinary Deity of the Jews. Time rolled on, time changed the situations, and with them the opinions of men.

The vulgar, ever in extremes, became persuaded the



crucifixion of Jesus was a supernatural event. Testimonies of miracles, so frequent in unenlightened ages, were not wanting to prove that he was something divine. This belief, rolling through the lapse of ages, met with the reveries of Plato and the reasonings of Aristotle, and acquired force and extent, until the divinity of Jesus became a dogma, which to dispute was death, which to doubt was infamy.

*Christianity* is now the established religion: he who attempts to impugn it must be contented to behold murderers and traitors take precedence of him in public opinion; though, if his genius be equal to his courage, and assisted by a peculiar coalition of circumstances, future ages may exalt him to a divinity, and persecute others in his name, as he was persecuted in the name of his predecessors in the homage of the world.

The same means that have supported every other popular belief, have supported Christianity. War, imprisonment, murder, and falsehood; deeds of unexampled and incomparable atrocity have made it what it is. We derive from our ancestors a belief thus fostered and supported: we quarrel, persecute, and hate for its maintenance. Does not analogy favour the opinion that, as, like other systems, Christianity has arisen and augmented, so like them it will decay and perish; that, as violence, darkness, and deceit, not reasoning and persuasion, have procured its admission among mankind, so, when enthusiasm has subsided, and time, that infallible controverter of false opinions, has involved its pretended evidences in the darkness of antiquity, it will become obsolete; that Milton's poem alone will give permanency in the remembrance of its absurdities; and that men will laugh as heartily at grace, faith, redemption, and original sin, as they now do at the metamorphoses of Jupiter, the miracles of Romish saints, the efficacy of witchcraft, and the appearance of departed spirits.

Had the Christian Religion commenced and continued by the mere force of reasoning and persuasion, by its



self-evidence, excellence and fitness, the preceding analogy would be inadmissible. We should never speculate on the future obsolescence of a system perfectly conformable to nature and reason : it would endure so long as they endured ; it would be a truth as indisputable as the light of the sun, the criminality of murder, and other facts, physical and moral, which, depending on our organisation and relative situations, must remain acknowledged as satisfactory, so long as man is man. It is an incontrovertible fact, the consideration of which ought to repress the hasty conclusions of credulity, or moderate its obstinacy in maintaining them, that, had the Jews not been a barbarous and fanatical race of men, had even the resolution of Pontius Pilate been equal to his candour, the Christian Religion never could have prevailed, it could not even have existed. Man ! the very existence of whose most cherished opinions depends from a thread so feeble, arises out of a source so equivocal, learn at least humility ; own at least that it is possible for thyself also to have been seduced by education and circumstance into the admission of tenets destitute of rational proof, and the truth of which has not yet been satisfactorily demonstrated. Acknowledge at least that the falsehood of thy brother's opinions is no sufficient reason for his meriting thy hatred. What ! because a fellow being disputes the reasonableness of thy faith, wilt thou punish him with torture and imprisonment ? If persecution for religious opinions were admitted by the moralist, how wide a door would not be open by which convulsionists of every kind might make inroads on the peace of society ! How many deeds of barbarism and blood would not receive a sanction ! But I will demand, if that man is not rather entitled to the respect than the discountenance of society, who, by disputing a received doctrine, either proves its falsehood and inutility (thereby aiming at the abolition of what is false and useless), or gives to its adherents an opportunity of establishing its excellence and truth. Surely this can be no crime. Surely the

individual who devotes his time to fearless and unrestricted inquiry into the grand questions arising out of our moral nature ought rather to receive the patronage, than encounter the vengeance, of an enlightened legislature. I would have you to know, my Lord, that fetters of iron cannot bind or subdue the soul of virtue. From the damps and solitude of its dungeon it ascends, free and undaunted, whither thine, from the pompous seat of judgment, dare not soar. I do not warn you to beware lest your profession as a Christian should make you forget that you are a man ; but I warn you against festinating that period, which, under the present coercive system, is too rapidly maturing, when the seats of justice shall be the seats of venality and slavishness, and the cells of Newgate become the abode of all that is honourable and true.

I mean not to compare Mr. Eaton with Socrates or Jesus ; he is a man of blameless and respectable character ; he is a citizen unimpeached with crime ; if, therefore, his rights as a citizen and a man have been infringed, they have been infringed by illegal and immoral violence. But I will assert that, should a second Jesus arise among men ; should such a one as Socrates again enlighten the earth ; lengthened imprisonment and infamous punishment (according to the regimen of persecution revived by your Lordship) would effect what hemlock and the cross have heretofore effected, and the stain on the national character, like that on Athens and Judea, would remain indelible, but by the destruction of the history in which it is recorded. When the Christian Religion shall have faded from the earth, when its memory like that of Polytheism now shall remain, but remain only as the subject of ridicule and wonder, indignant posterity would attach immortal infamy to such an outrage ; like the murder of Socrates, it would secure the execration of every age.

The horrible and wide-wasting enormities, which gleam like comets through the darkness of gothic and superstitious ages, are regarded by the moralist as no more than the

necessary effect of known causes ; but, when an enlightened age and nation signalises itself by a deed becoming none but barbarians and fanatics, philosophy itself is even induced to doubt whether human nature will ever emerge from the pettishness and imbecility of its childhood. The system of persecution, at whose new birth, you, my Lord, are one of the presiding midwives, is not more impotent and wicked than inconsistent. The press is loaded with what are called (ironically, I should conceive) *proofs* of the Christian religion : these books are replete with invective and calumny against infidels ; they presuppose that he who rejects Christianity must be utterly divested of reason and feeling ; they advance the most unsupported assertions, and take as first principles the most revolting dogmas. The inferences drawn from these assumed premises are imposingly logical and correct ; but, if a foundation is weak, no architect is needed to foretell the instability of the superstructure. If the truth of Christianity is not disputable, for what purpose are these books written ? If there are sufficient to prove it, what further need of controversy ? *If God has spoken, why is the universe not convinced ?* If the Christian religion needs deeper learning, more painful investigation to establish its genuineness, wherefore attempt to accomplish that by force, which the human mind can alone effect with satisfaction to itself ? If, lastly, its truth *cannot* be demonstrated, wherefore impotently attempt to snatch from God the government of his creation, and impiously assert that the Spirit of Benevolence has left that knowledge most essential to the well-being of man, the only one which, since its promulgation, has been the subject of unceasing cavil, the causes of irreconcilable hatred ? Either the Christian religion is true, or it is not. If true it comes from God, and its authenticity can admit of doubt and dispute no further than its Omnipotent Author is willing to allow. If true it admits of rational proof, and is capable of being placed equally beyond controversy, as the principles which



have been established concerning matter and mind, by Locke and Newton; and in proportion to the usefulness of the fact in dispute, so must it be supposed that a benevolent being is anxious to procure the diffusion of its knowledge on the earth,—If false, surely no enlightened legislature would punish the reasoner, who opposes a system so much the more fatal and pernicious as it is extensively admitted; so much the more productive of absurd and ruinous consequences, as it is entwined by education, with the prejudices and affections of the human heart, in the shape of a popular belief.

Let us suppose that some half-witted philosopher should assert that the earth was the centre of the universe, or that idea could enter the human mind independently of sensation or reflexion. This man would assert what is demonstrably incorrect; he would promulgate a false opinion. Yet, would he therefore deserve pillory and imprisonment? By no means; probably few would discharge more correctly the duties of a citizen and a man. I admit that the case above stated is not precisely in point. The thinking part of the community has not received as indisputable the truth of Christianity, as they have that of the Newtonian system. A very large portion of society, and that powerfully and extensively connected, derives its sole emolument from the belief of Christianity, as a popular faith.

To torture and imprison the asserter of a dogma, however ridiculous and false, is highly barbarous and impolitic. How, then, does not the cruelty of persecution, become aggravated when it is directed against the opposer of an opinion *yet under dispute*, and which men of unrivalled acquirements, penetrating genius, and stainless virtue, have spent, and at last sacrificed, their lives in combating!

The time is rapidly approaching, I hope that you, my Lord, may live to behold its arrival, when the Mahometan, the Jew, the Christian, the Deist, and the Atheist, will live together in one community, equally sharing the benefits which arise from its association, and united in the bonds



of charity and brotherly love. My Lord, you have condemned an innocent man : no crime was imputed to him—and you sentenced him to torture and imprisonment. I have not addressed this letter to you with the hope of convincing you that you have acted wrong. The most unprincipled and barbarous of men are not unprepared with sophisms to prove that they would have acted in no other manner, and to show that vice is virtue. But I raise my solitary voice to express my disapprobation, so far as it goes, of the cruel and unjust sentence you passed upon Mr. Eaton—to assert, so far as I am capable of influencing, those rights of humanity which you have wantonly and unlawfully infringed.

My Lord,  
Yours, etc.

## VII.—LYNMOUTH, TANYRALLT, AND SECOND VISIT TO DUBLIN

June 30, 1812—April 3, 1813

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CORRESPONDENCE with Hookham—"Le Système de la Nature"—  
On the study of the classics—Godwin invited to Lynmouth—  
Irish History—Sir James Lawrence—"Queen Mab"—T. L.  
Peacock's Poems—In London—Shelley reconciled to Hogg—  
Departure of Miss Hitchener—At Tremadoc—Fanny Imlay and  
Harriet—Shelley's Book List—"Biblical Extracts"—The Trial  
of John and Leigh Hunt—Shelley Assaulted at Tanyrallt—Second  
Visit to Ireland.

HARRIET SHELLEY TO CATHERINE NUGENT

Direct LYMOUTH, NEAR BARNSTAPLE, DEVONSHIRE,

June 30, [1812].

MY DEAR MRS. NUGENT,

Now that we are again settled<sup>(1)</sup> I take up the pen in the hopes of giving that pleasure which I received from reading your letter. I received it during my stay at Cwm Elan, and a few days after we left that lovely spot, and its amiable hostess for a journey to Chepstow where we were in hopes of finding a house that would suit us, and where we might with pleasure receive the visit of one whose presence like the sun would make happy those who beheld her. Your letter damped the joy I felt at reading it, by seeing that you could not come to us this summer, for I had hoped tho' we had left Nantgwillt that we should have been sure of a visit from you. However, I will say no more about it, as you must be the best judge of your own affairs, and I doubt not that were we to draw you from your own country we should be the means, tho' innocently, of depriving many of your unfortunate countrymen of that relief you know so well how to bestow. I will say, then, though I am a loser by it, Continue, oh, amiable woman, the path marked out to thee by virtue and humanity, and let not the whisperings of selfishness in us take thee

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(<sup>1</sup>) Prof. Dowden says that Shelley reached Lynmouth probably by June 25 or 26. The cottage that they occupied has been pulled down and another built on the site. The landlady was a Mrs. Hooper, whose niece retained a vivid recollection of Shelley and who pointed out to the late Miss Mathilde Blind, the precise situation of the cottage.—"Life of Shelley," Vol. I, pp. 278-9.

from-so laudable an undertaking. We may yet meet ere this world shall close our eyes, and that we both desire it our hearts are the best judges. I will now tell you how we came into Devon. When we arrived at Chepstow we found the house not half built, and by no means large enough for our family.<sup>(1)</sup> I did not regret it as the country was by no means beautiful. We then proceeded into this country, and came to this place in our way to Ilfracombe and the beauty of it has made us residents here for the summer months, when we think of going to London for the winter. It combines all the beauties of our late residence with the addition of a fine bold sea. We have taken the only cottage there was, which is most beautifully situated, commanding a fine view of the sea, with mountains at the side and behind us. Vegetation is more luxurious here than in any part of England. We have roses and myrtle creeping up the sides of the house, which is thatched at the top. It is such a little place that it seems more like a fairy scene than anything in reality. All the houses are built in the cottage style, and I suppose there are not more than 30 in all. We send to Barnstaple for everything, and our letters come but twice a week. It is 18 miles from [here], therefore we ought to be able to [paper torn—? manage] very well on a horse to get there. We have an immense precipice to descend into the valley, about 2 miles in length, which no carriage can come down. It seems as if nature had intended this place should be so romantic, and shut out from all other intercourse with the neighbouring villages and towns. We still have our Irishman, Daniel [Hill or Healy], whom you may remember in Grafton Street. I am afraid we shall be obliged to part with him, as we do not find him that useful servant we expect to find he would have been. Percy has some thoughts of sending him to Dublin to see after his poems that are at the printers, but whether he will or not it is impossible to say. We have not heard from Mr. Lawless now for some time. I suppose his present employment (to my idea not very laudable) fills up his time so much that he cannot think of his absent friends. I hope this is not the case as I should be sorry, knowing him to be an Irishman, if it were true. I think he is a man of very great talents and abilities; but I am afraid that Mr. Curran will never lend him a helping hand. I must now say adieu, my dear friend, and may you ever feel that happiness which springs from conscious integrity and goodness of heart. Percy and Eliza desire to be most kindly remembered, and believe me ever your truly sincere and affectionate friend.

HARRIET.

[Addressed outside],

Mrs. NUGENT,  
No. 101 Grafton Street,  
Dublin, Ireland.

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<sup>(1)</sup> Godwin had told Shelley of this "nice cottage" at Chepstow, "near Tintern Abbey and Piecefield."

## 148. TO THOMAS HOOKHAM

(Old Bond Street, London)

LYMOUTH,

July 29, 1812.

(Fragment)

*Shelley mentions in this letter his having forwarded to Hookham twenty-five copies of his Letter to Lord Ellenborough, and continues :—*

I beg you to accept of them, that you may show them to any friends who *are not informers*. I shall not persist in my intention of procuring a publisher. Possessing the knowledge I now possess, it would be unjust in me to attempt to draw upon any one the indignation of bigotry and despotism. I have changed, therefore, my former plan to that of gratuitous distribution. In case that you could dispose of more than those which I now send, I beg that you will not hesitate a moment in informing me. I have several works, some unfinished, some yet only in contemplation; they are principally in the form of poems or essays. As soon as any one of them is completed I will send it to you, and shall take it as an additional favour if you can, consistently with safety, publish it. I have received the parcel safe. I would thank you to send in addition Milton's Prose Works, "Elements of Chemical Philosophy," by Sir H. Davy (to be published August 1), "Medical Extracts," Hartley "On Man," "Rights of Women," by Mary Wollstonecraft.

## 149. TO WILLIAM GODWIN

(London)

LYMOUTH, BARNSTAPLE,

July 5, 1812.

MY DEAR SIR,

I write to acknowledge the pleasure I anticipate in the perusal of some letters from you and yours, which have not



yet reached us. The post comes to Lymouth but twice in a week, and some allowance is to be made for the casualties which attend an event by which we have been unexpectedly unsettled. We were all so much prepossessed in favour of Mr. Eton's house,<sup>1</sup> that nothing but the invincible objection of scarcity of room would have induced us, even after seeing it, to resign the pre-determination we had formed of taking it. We now reside in a small cottage, but the poverty and humbleness of the apartments is compensated for by their number, and we can invite our friends with a consciousness that there is enclosed space wherein they may sleep, which was not to be found at Mr. Eton's. I will, in the absence of other topics, explain to you my reason for fixing upon this residence. I am, as you know, a minor, and as such depend upon a limited income (£400 per annum) allowed by my relatives. Upon this income justice and humanity have many claims, and the necessary expenses of existing in conformity to some habitudes—which may be said to be interwoven with our being—dissipate the remainder. I might, it is true, raise money on my prospects, but the percentage is so enormous that it is with extreme unwillingness I should have recourse to a step, which I might then be induced to repeat, even to a ruinous frequency and extent. The involvement of my patrimony would interfere with schemes on which it is my fondest delight to speculate. I may truly, therefore, be classed generically with those minors who pant for twenty-one, though I trust that the specific difference is very, very wide. The expenses incurred by the failure of our attempt in settling at Nantgwillt have rendered it necessary for us

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<sup>1</sup> Some of the names that appear in Shelley's correspondence at this time are confusing owing to their similarity. There were Eaton, the prosecuted bookseller, about whom Shelley addressed his letter to Lord Ellenborough, and Mr. Eton, the landlord of the Chepstow cottage; Mrs. Hooper at Nantgwillt, and Mrs. Hooper, Shelley's Lymouth landlady. Shelley had published through Stockdale in London, and had endeavoured to arrange with a Dublin Stockdale to print his poems.

to settle for a time in some cheap residence, in order to recover our pecuniary independence. I will still hope that you and your estimable family will, before much time has elapsed, become inmates of our house. This house boasts not such accommodations as I should feel satisfied in offering you, but I will propose a plan which, if it meets your approbation, may prove an interlude to our meeting, and become an earnest that much time will not elapse before its occurrence. I have a friend<sup>1</sup>; but first I will make you in some measure acquainted with her. She is a woman with whom her excellent qualities made me acquainted. Though deriving her birth from a very humble source, she contracted, during youth, a very deep and refined habit of thinking; her mind, naturally inquisitive and penetrating, overstepped the bounds of prejudice, she formed for herself an unbeaten path of life.

By the patronage of a lady, whose liberality of mind is singular, this woman at the age of twenty was enabled to commence the conduct of a school. She concealed not the uncommon modes of thinking which she had adopted, and publicly instructed youth as a Deist and a Republican. When I first knew her, she had not read "Political Justice," yet her life appeared to me in a great degree modelled upon its precepts. Such is the woman, who is about to become an inmate of our family. She will pass through London, and I shall take the liberty of introducing to you one whom I do not consider unworthy of the advantage. As soon as we recover our financial liberty, we mean to come to London. Why may not Fanny<sup>2</sup> come to Lymouth with Miss Hitchener (such is her name) and return with us all to London in the autumn? I entreat you to look with a favourable eye upon this request, and indeed our hearts

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<sup>1</sup> Eliza Hitchener, who when passing through London on her way to visit the Shelleys, supped and slept at Godwin's house on July 14.

<sup>2</sup> Fanny Imlay, the daughter of Mary Wollstonecraft and Gilbert Imlay. Godwin treated her as a daughter, and she was known by his name.

long for a personal intercourse with those to whom they are devoted ; and I fear, from the tenor of Mrs. G[odwin's] letter, that we must give up the hope of seeing *you*. This disappointed hope determines us to journey to London *as soon as we can*. This place is beautiful, it equals—Harriet says it exceeds—Nantgwillt. Mountains certainly of not less perpendicular elevation than 1,000 feet are broken abruptly into valleys of indescribable fertility and grandeur. The climate is so mild, that myrtles of an immense size twine up our cottage, and roses blow in the open air in winter. In addition to these is the sea, which dashes against a rocky and caverned shore, presenting an ever-changing view. All “shows of sky and earth, of sea and valley” are here. Adieu ! Believe how devotedly and sincerely I must now remain yours,

P. B. SHELLEY.

I write this letter by return of post, and send purposely to Barnstaple. I have *more* to say, but will reserve it until I receive the letters which are on the way.

To Mr. WILLIAM GODWIN, London.

150. TO WILLIAM GODWIN  
(London)

LYMOUTH,

July 29, 1812.

MY DEAR GODWIN,

I have never seen you,<sup>1</sup> and yet I think I know you ;

<sup>1</sup> In the undated letter of Godwin to Shelley printed by Hogg in his “Life of Shelley,” Vol. II, p. 141, he says : “Our acquaintance is a whimsical, and, to a certain degree, anomalous one. I have never seen your face,—

‘Your face, my Thane, is a book, where men  
May read strange matters,’

and till I have seen a man's face, I may say, in good sooth, I do not know him. Would that this whimsical and anomalous state of our acquaintance were brought to a conclusion !” He then continues that not being able to read Shelley's character in a legitimate way,

I think I knew you even before I ever heard from you, whilst yet it was a question with me, whether you were living or dead. It has appeared to me that there are lineaments in the soul, as well as in the face; lineaments, too, less equivocal and deceptive, than those which result from mere physical organization. This opinion may be illusory; if I find it so, it shall be retracted. You say, three letters of yours have been unanswered. I waited to know whether those of mine contained any topics worthy of notice, or discussion. I find they do not; therefore, let us pass on.

To begin with Helvétius. I have read "*Le Système de la Nature*," and suspect this to be Helvétius's by your charges against it.<sup>1</sup> It is a book of uncommon powers, yet too obnoxious to accusations of sensuality and selfishness. Although, like you, an irreconcilable enemy to the system of self-love, both from a feeling of its deformity and a conviction of its falsehood, I can by no means conceive how the loftiest disinterestedness is incompatible with the strictest materialism. In fact the doctrine which affirms that there is no such thing as matter, and that which affirms that all is matter, appear to me perfectly indifferent in the question between benevolence and self-love. I cannot see how they interfere with each other, or why the two doctrines of materialism and disinterestedness cannot be held in one mind as independently of each other, as the two

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he is reduced to collect traits of his character as they offer themselves in his correspondence. "I am half afraid that I have got a glimpse of a new one—that perhaps I may not altogether approve—this day." It appears that Shelley had addressed a letter to Mr. Eton, at Mrs. Godwin's, declining to take the cottage at Chepstow, of which Eton was the landlord, stating that "the insufficiency of house-room is a vital objection. Godwin, who opened and read this letter, was displeased with Shelley for his motives in rejecting the cottage. With "mild severity" the philosopher rebuked his young friend (with an allowance from his father of "only £200 a year") for his want of prudence and warned him against indulgence in luxuries.

<sup>1</sup> The book was by Baron D'Holbach. See note to letter No. 143, p. 315.



truths that a cricket-ball is round and a box square. Immateriality seems to me nothing but a simple denial of the presence of matter, of the presence of all the forms of being with which our senses are acquainted, and it surely is somewhat inconsistent to assign real existence to what is a mere negation of all that actual world to which our senses introduce us.

I have read Berkeley,<sup>1</sup> and the perusal of his arguments tended more than anything to convince me that immaterialism, and other words of general usage, deriving all their force from mere predicates in *non*, were invented by the pride of philosophers to conceal their ignorance, even from themselves. If I err in what I say, or if I differ from you, though in this point I think I do not, reason stands arbiter between us. Reason, if I may be permitted to personify it, is as much your superior, as you are mine. An hour and a thousand years are equally incommensurate with eternity. With respect to Helvétius's opinion to the omnipotence of education, *there* I submit to your authority, because authority, derived from experience such as yours, is reason. I will own that the opinion of Helvétius, until very lately, has been mine.

You know that in most points I agree with you. As I see you in "Political Justice," I agree with you. Your "Enquirer" is replete with speculations, in which I sympathize, yet the arguments there, in favour of classical learning failed to remove all my doubts on that point. I am not sufficiently vain and dogmatical to say that *now* I have *no* doubts on the deleteriousness of classical education; but it certainly is my opinion—nor has your last letter sufficed to refute it—that the evils of acquiring Greek and Latin considerably overbalance the benefit. But why, because I think so, should it even be supposed necessary

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<sup>1</sup> Shelley read Berkeley at Keswick; Southey borrowed a copy belonging to Charles Lloyd (the friend of Lamb and Coleridge), and Shelley was especially struck with Lloyd's marginal notes. See Shelley's Letter to Leigh Hunt, Sept. 27, 1819.

by you to warn me against fearing that *you feel displeasure*. Assure yourself that the picture of you in the retina of my intellect is a standing proof to me that its original is capable of extending to opinions the most unlimited toleration, and that he will scan with disgust nothing but a defect of the heart. Let Reason, then, be arbiter between us. Yet sometimes I am struck with dismay when I consider that, placed where you are, high up on the craggy mountain of knowledge, you will scarcely condescend to doubt, even sufficiently for the purposes of discussion, that opinion which you hold, although by that doubting you might fit me for following your footsteps. Yet I will explain my reasons for doubting the efficacy of classical learning as a means of forwarding the interests of the human race.

In the first place, I do not perceive how one of the truths of "Political Justice" rests on the excellence of ancient literature. That Latin and Greek have contributed to form your character it were idle to dispute, but in how great a degree have they contributed? Are not the reasonings on which your system is founded utterly distinct from and unconnected with the excellence of Greece and Rome? Was not the government of republican Rome, and most of those of Greece, as oppressive and arbitrary, as liberal of encouragement to monopoly, as that of Great Britain is at present? And what do we learn from their poets? As you have yourself acknowledged somewhere, "they are fit for nothing but the perpetuation of the noxious race of heroes in the world." Lucretius forms, perhaps, the single exception. Throughout the whole of their literature runs a vein of thought similar to that which you have so justly censured in Helvétius. Honour—and the opinion either of contemporaries, or more frequently of posterity—is set so much above virtue as, according to the last words of Brutus, to make it nothing but an empty name. Their politics sprang from the same narrow and corrupted source. Witness the interminable aggressions between each other of the states of Greece; the thirst of

conquest with which even republican Rome desolated the earth—they are our masters in politics, because we are so immoral as to prefer self-interest to virtue, and expediency to positive good. You say that words will neither debauch our understandings, nor distort our moral feelings. You say that the time of youth could not be better employed than in the acquisition of classical learning. But *words* are the very things that so eminently contribute to the growth and establishment of prejudice: the learning of *words* before the mind is capable of attaching correspondent ideas to them, is like possessing machinery with the use of which we are so unacquainted as to be in danger of misusing it. But words are merely signs of ideas. How many evils, and how great, spring from the annexing inadequate and improper ideas to words! The words honour, virtue, duty, goodness, are examples of this remark. Besides, we only want one distinct sign for one idea. Do you not think that there is much more danger of our wanting ideas for the signs of them already made, than of our wanting these signs for inexpressible ideas? I should think that natural philosophy, medicine, astronomy, and, above all, history, would be sufficient employments for immaturity; employments which would completely fill up the era of tutelage, and render unnecessary all expedients for losing time well by gaining it safely.

Of the Latin language, as a grammar, I think highly. It is a key to the European languages, and we can hardly be said to know our own without first attaining a complete knowledge of it. Still, I cannot help considering it as an affair of minor importance, inasmuch as the science of things is superior to the science of words. Nor can I help considering the vindicators of ancient learning—I except you, not from politeness, but because you, unlike them, are willing to subject your opinions to reason—as the vindicators of a literary despotism; as the tracers of a circle which is intended to shut out from real knowledge, and to which this fictitious knowledge is attached, all who

do not breathe the air of prejudice, or who will not support the established systems of politics, religion, and morals. I have as great a contempt for Cobbett as you can have, but it is because he is a dastard and a time-server; has no humanity, no refinement; but were he a classical scholar, would he have more? Did Greek and Roman literature refine the soul of Johnson? Does it extend the views of the thousand narrow bigots educated in the very bosom of classicality? But

in publica commoda peccem  
Si longo sermone morer tua tempora,

says Horace at the commencement of his longest letter.

Well, adieu! All join in kindest love to your amiable family, of whom I have forgotten to speak, but not to think; and I remain,

Very truly and affectionately yours,

P. B. SHELLEY.

To Mr. W. GODWIN, London.

### 151. TO WILLIAM GODWIN

LYMOUTH,

July 7, 1812.

MY DEAR SIR,

The person whom I sent yesterday to the post-town has returned. He brought those letters from you and yours which have been forwarded from Cwm Elan to Chepstow.

It is a singular coincidence, that in my last letter I entered into details respecting my mode of life, and unfolded to you the reasons by which I was induced, on being disappointed in Mr. Eton's house, to seek an unexpensive retirement. I feel my heart throb exultingly when, as I read the misgivings of your mind concerning my rectitude,<sup>1</sup> I reflect that I have to a certain degree refuted them by

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<sup>1</sup> See note to letter No. 150, p. 343.



anticipation. My letter, dated the 5th, will prove to you that it is *not* to live in splendour, which I hate—*not* to accumulate indulgences, which I despise, that my present conduct was adopted. Most unworthy, indeed, should I be of that high destiny which he, who is your friend and pupil, must share, if I was not myself practically a proselyte to that doctrine, by promulgating which with unremitting zeal and industry I have become the object of hatred and suspicion.

Our *cottage*—for such, not nominally, but really, it is—exceeds not in its accommodations [the dwellings of the peasantry which surround it. Its beds are of the plainest, I may say the coarsest materials and from the single consideration, that accommodations for personal convenience were glaringly defective, did I refrain in my last letter from pressing the request, whose concession is nearest to my desires, that *you* would come to this lovely solitude, and bring to a conclusion that state of acquaintance which stands between us—*perfect* intimacy. I was beginning a sentence in the middle of the second page of my letter, in which I should have pressed you to come *here*, when Harriet interrupted me, bade me consider that your health was delicate, that our rooms were complete *servants' rooms*. I finished the sentence as it stands. She added, that we would hasten our journey to London, and that *you all* should live with us. It was the thought of the moment ; I send it you without comment, as it arose. See my defence. Yet, my esteemed and venerated friend, accept my thanks—consider yourself as yet more beloved by me, for the manner in which you have reproved my suppositional errors ; and ever may you, like the tenderest and wisest of parents, be on the watch to detect those traits of vice which, yet undiscovered, are nevertheless marked on the tablet of my character, so that I pursue undeviatingly the path which you first cleared through the wilderness of life.

I said, in my last letter, that there are certain habitudes

in conformity to which it is almost necessary that persons, who have contracted them, should exist. By this I do not mean that a splendid mansion, or an equipage, is in any degree essential to life ; but that if I was employed at the loom, or the plough, and my wife in culinary business and housewifery, we should, in the present state of society, quickly become very different beings, and, I may add, less useful to our species. Nor, consistently with invincible ideas of delicacy, can two persons of opposite sexes, unconnected by certain ties, sleep in the same apartment. Probably, in a regenerated state of society, agriculture and manufacture would be compatible with the most powerful intellect and most polished manners—probably delicacy, as it relates to sexual distinction, would disappear—yet now, a plough-boy can with difficulty acquire refinement of intellect ; and promiscuous sexual intercourse, under the present system of thinking, would inevitably lead to consequences the most injurious to the happiness of mankind. Mr. Eton's house had not sufficient bed-rooms, *scarcely* sufficient for ourselves, and you and your family must sleep, for, my dear friend, believe me that I would not willingly take a house for any time, whither you could not come. Have I written desultorily ? Is my explanation of habitudes incorrect, or indistinct ? Pardon me, for I am anxious to lose no time in communicating my sentiments.

Harriet is writing to Fanny ; if she is particular in her invitation of Fanny, it is not meant exclusively. There are a sufficient quantity of bed-rooms, and if the humbleness of their quality is no objection, I need not say—Come, thou venerated and excellent friend, and make us happy.—Adieu !

Believe me, with the utmost sincerity and truth,

Ever yours,

P. B. SHELLEY.

(Single sheet.) To Mr. WILLIAM GODWIN, London.

## HARRIET SHELLEY TO CATHERINE NUGENT

LYNMOUTH, August 4 [1812].

MY DEAR MRS. NUGENT,

Your affectionate letter gave us very great pleasure. To hear from those we love when it is not in our power to see them constitutes one of the greatest joys in existence. You may suppose how we laughed at the idea of the tempter, tho' how such a horrible looking creature should gain admittance to the garden of Eden at once surprises me and turns the sanctity of the whole into a burlesque. I suppose the ingenious discoverer has very good reasons and arguments to support his cause, tho' we may doubt if we like; the idea is truly ridiculous and laughable and how do the people take this new mode of accounting for how all the sin in the world arose. Will they believe it as soon as they would the other? If they do I shall be inclined to think their belief is a mere matter of form and not an involuntary act. If they go on in this way we shall next hear, I suppose, of its being a bear or lion or anything else. I thank you in Percy's name for your kind offer of services, tho' at the same time we cannot accept it. The case is this. His printer refuses to go on with his poems until he is paid. Now such a demand is seldom made, as printers are never paid till the profit arising from the sale of the work comes in, and Percy agreed with him to this effect, and as long as we staid in Dublin he wore the mask which is now taken off. However, I am in great hope that Mr. Lawless will get them from him. He is coming to London on business and then we shall see. I wish to think well of him because he is your countryman, tho' there is too much of the (man of the world) about him. Perhaps he is different out of the city. If not I shall still admire his talents, tho' I have no high opinion of him. What do you think of Cobbett? A man that can change his opinions so quickly I do not admire, and particularly when he could write of Sir F. Burdett in such an abusive and contradictory a way. It seems to me that Cobbett merely changes his sentiments as occasion requires or as best suits his interests. I hope I am mistaken, tho' his behaviour looks very like it. Percy has sent you a defence of D. I. Eaton. It must not be published, but you [will] give us your opinion of it. What think you of Lord Stanhope?—divine being, how beautifully he speaks. We have sent him one as well as Sir F. Burdett. Did you see a clergyman enter into his defence? I do not remember his name, but it was a very wonderful thing to hear a clergyman wish for universal toleration. He said his standing in the pillory was an honour to him. I think the public mind is very much in favour of Mr. Eaton. It looks well, does it not? Our friend, Miss Hitchener, is come to us. She is very busy writing for the good of mankind. She is very dark in complexion, with a great quantity of long black hair. She talks a great deal. If you like great talkers she will suit you. She is taller than me or my sister, and as thin as it is possible to be. I hope you will see her some day. I should think that next summer you might take a peep



at us. You may judge how much we all wish to see you. Your being an Irish woman must interest us in your happiness independently of our knowing the amiable qualities that you possess. I have read Miss Owenson's "Missionary" and much do I admire the author. I am now reading her "Novice of St. Dominick." I regret not having known her when I was in Dublin. Her Patriotic Sketches have won my heart. She speaks so feelingly of your dear country, that I love her for it. Miss Hitchener has read your letter and loves you in good earnest—her own expression. I know you would love her did you know her. Her age is 30. She looks like as if she was only 24 and her spirits are excellent. She laughs and talks and writes all day. She has seen the Godwins, and thinks Godwin different to what he seems, he lives so much from his family, only seeing them at stated hours. We do not like that, and he thinks himself such a very great *man*. He would not let one of his children come to *us* first because he had not seen our faces. Just as if writing to a person in which we express all our thoughts, was not a sufficient knowledge of them. I know our friend [Miss Hitchener], whom we call Bessy, just as well when we corresponded as I do now. Such excuses sit not well upon so great a literary character as he is. I might have expected such an excuse from a woman of selfish and narrow mind, but not from Godwin's. I must now finish. They all unite in love and affection to my dear little Irishwoman, and believe me more than ever your sincerely attached and affectionate friend,

H. S.

[Addressed outside],

Mrs. NUGENT,

No. 101 Grafton Street,  
Dublin, Ireland.

## 152. TO CATHERINE NUGENT

*(Written by Harriet)*

LYNMOUTH,

August 11 [1812].

MY DEAR MRS. NUGENT,

Your friend and our friend, *Bessy*, has been reading "Pieces of Irish History," and is so much enraged with the characters there mentioned that nothing will satisfy her desire of revenge but the printing and publishing of them to exhibit to the world those characters which are (shameful to say) held up as beings possessing every amiable quality, whilst their hearts are as bad as it is possible to be. They will be shown to the world in a new light, and it will remain



to be seen if that world does not repay them as they so eminently deserve. Percy thinks of printing it by subscription. 500 subscribers at seven shillings each will amply repay the printing and publishing. Percy intends to print some proposals for printing Pieces of Irish History, saying that everyone whether Irish or English ought to read them. We depend upon you for many subscribers, as being upon the spot where so many of your exalted and brave countrymen suffered martyrdom. I should think there were very many who would be glad to put their names to it. There must be many still smarting under the wounds they have seen their brave companions suffer, and all from this hated country of mine. Good God, were I an Irishman or woman how I should hate the English. It is wonderful how the poor Irish people can tolerate them. But I am writing to one who from her example shows them how they ought to tolerate this barbarous nation of ours. Thank God, we are not all alike, for I too can hate Lord Castlereagh as much as any Irishman. How does my heart's blood run cold at the idea of what he did in your unfortunate country. How is it that man is suffered to walk the streets in open daylight? Oh, if I were to meet him I really think I could fly at him and tear him to pieces! I have drawn a likeness of him and Percy says it is a very good one. You know I have no pretensions to drawing, but sometimes I take up the pen and sketch faces. I have not preserved the horrible countenance, but if I were to meet it I should do it for him (*sic*). I cannot bear Curran; what use is he to your country? Was he active at the time of the Union? No, if he had been, tho' his life had been the sacrifice, Ireland would have been saved. I have no patience with Curran. I shall convert Mr. *Lawless* I hope from his *idol*. It is too sickening to hear him talk of Curran as he does. We are going to the valley of Llangothlin. It is much nearer to Ireland than we are here or even at Nantgwillt. If we are there next summer I hope we shall see you. Bessie wishes very much to see

you. Your last letter won her heart instantly. Reading "Pieces of Irish History" has made her so low-spirited. She possesses too much feeling for her own happiness. I am in great hopes she will get the better of her low spirits. May I ask how are your spirits and your health? If they are but as good as I wish them to be it will make me very happy. You do not let your feelings get the better of your reason. If you do I am extremely sorry, as I shall know from that you are not as happy as you ought to be. They all unite in the kindest regards to the dear little Irishwoman, and believe me most sincerely your attached friend,

H. S.

(Written by Shelley)

I shall print proposals for publishing by subscription, and if you could send us any names you would much benefit the *Cause*. We determine at any rate to publish the Irish History. It is a matter of doubt with me whether any bookseller will dare put his name to it. This will be no obstacle.

153. To ———<sup>1</sup>

[LYMOUTH, BARNSTAPLE],

August 12, 1812.

DEAR SIR,

Your reasons do not convince me. A human being is a member of the community, not as a limb is a member of the body, or as what is a part of a machine, intended only to contribute to some general, joint result. He was created not to be merged in the whole as a drop in the ocean, or as a particle of sand on the sea-shore, and to aid only in comprising a man. He is an ultimate being, made for his own perfection as his highest end, made to maintain an

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<sup>1</sup> The correspondent to whom this letter was addressed has not, I believe, been identified. The original is in the Montagu collection at the Bodleian Library.

individual existence, and to serve others only as far as consists with his own virtue and progress. Hitherto governments have tended greatly to obscure this importance of the individual, to depress him in his own eyes, to give him the idea of an outward interest more important than the invisible soul, and an outward authority more important than his own secret conscience. Rulers have called the private man the property of the State, meaning generally by the State themselves ; and thus the many have been immolated to the few, and have even believed that this was their highest destination. These views cannot be too earnestly withstood. Nothing seems to me so needful as to give to the mind the consciousness—which governments have done so much to suppress—of its own separate work. Let the individual feel that he is placed in the community not to part with his individuality, or to become a tool. To me the progress of society consists in nothing more than in bringing out the individual, in giving him a consciousness of his own being, and in quickening him to strengthen and elevate his mind.

No man, I affirm, will serve his fellow-beings so effectually, so fervently, as he who is not their slave ; as he who, casting off every yoke, subjects himself to the law of duty in his own mind. For this law enjoins a disinterested and generous spirit. Individuality, or moral self-subsistence, is the secret foundation of an all-comprehending love. No man so multiplies his bonds with the community as he who watches most jealously over his own perfection. There is a beautiful harmony between the good of the State and the moral freedom and dignity of the individual. Were it not so, were these interests in any case discordant, were an individual ever called to serve his country by acts debasing his own mind, he ought not to waver a moment as to the good which he should prefer. Property, life, he should joyfully surrender to the State. But his soul he must never stain or enslave. In my next I shall proceed to point out some of the means by which this spiritual liberty may

be advanced. I have neither inclination nor room to say more.—Write soon, and believe me ever yours.

PERCY B. SHELLEY.

154. TO SIR JAMES HENRY LAWRENCE

Knight of Malta

LYMOUTH, BARNSTAPLE, DEVON,

August 17, 1812.

SIR,

I feel peculiar satisfaction in seizing the opportunity which your politeness places in my power, of expressing to you personally (as I may say) a high acknowledgment of my sense of your talents and principles, which, before I conceived it possible that I should ever know you, I sincerely entertained. Your "Empire of the Nairs,"<sup>1</sup> which I read this spring, succeeded in making me a perfect convert to its doctrines. I then retained no doubts of the evils of marriage;—Mrs. Wollstonecraft reasons too well for that; but I had been dull enough not to perceive the greatest argument against it, until developed in the "Nairs," viz., prostitution both legal and illegal.

I am a young man, not yet of age, and have now been married a year to a woman younger than myself. Love seems inclined to stay in the prison, and my only reason for putting him in chains, whilst convinced of the unholiness of the act, was, a knowledge that, in the present state of society, if love is not thus villainously treated, she, who is most loved, will be treated worse by a misjudging world. In short, seduction, which term could have no meaning

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<sup>1</sup> "The Empire of the Nairs; or, the Rights of Woman. An Utopian Romance, in twelve Books [and 4 vols.]. By James Lawrence, author of 'The Bosom Friend,' 'Love, an Allegory,' etc.," was published by Hookham in 1811. This romance, which deals with the Nair caste in Malabar, was originally written in German and published in 1800; it was afterwards re-written in French and finally in English. "Love" is one of Sir James Lawrence's poems.



in a rational society, has now a most tremendous one ; the fictitious merit attached to chastity has made that a forerunner of the most terrible ruins, which, in Malabar, would be a pledge of honour and homage. If there is any enormous and desolating crime, of which I should shudder to be accused, it is seduction. I need not say how much I admire "Love ;" and little as a British public seems to appreciate its merit in never permitting it to emerge from a first edition, it is with satisfaction I find, that justice has conceded abroad what bigotry has denied at home.

I shall take the liberty of sending you any little publication I may give to the world. Mrs. S. joins with myself in hoping, if we come to London this winter, we may be favoured with the personal friendship of one whose writings we have learned to esteem.

Yours very truly,

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

155. TO THOMAS HOOKHAM  
(Old Bond Street)

LYNMOUTH, BARNSTAPLE,  
Aug[ust] 18, 1812.

DEAR SIR,

Your parcel arrived last night, for which I am much obliged. Before I advert to any other topic, I will explain the contents of mine in which this is enclosed. In the first place, I send you fifty copies of the Letter.<sup>1</sup> I send you a copy of a work which I have procured from America, and which I am exceedingly anxious should be published. It developes, as you will perceive by the most superficial

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<sup>1</sup> To Lord Ellenborough. See note, p. 323.

reading, the actual state of republicanized Ireland, and appears to me, above all things, calculated to remove the prejudices which have too long been cherished of that oppressed country. I enclose also two pamphlets<sup>1</sup> which I printed and distributed whilst in Ireland some months ago (no bookseller daring to publish them). They were on that account attended with only partial success, and I request your opinion as to the probable result of publishing them with the annexed suggestions<sup>2</sup> in one pamphlet, with an explanatory preface, in *London*. They would find their way to Dublin.

You confer on me an obligation, and involve a high compliment, by your advice. I shall, if possible, prepare a volume of essays, moral and *religious*, by November ; but, all my MSS. now being in Dublin, and from peculiar circumstances not immediately obtainable, I do not know whether I can. I enclose also, by way of specimen, all that I have written of a little poem<sup>3</sup> begun since my arrival in England. I conceive I have matter enough for six more cantos. You will perceive that I have not attempted to temper my constitutional enthusiasm in that poem. Indeed, a poem is safe : the iron-souled Attorney-General would scarcely dare to attack [it]. The Past, the Present, and the Future, are the grand and comprehensive topics of this poem. I have not yet half exhausted the second of them.

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<sup>1</sup> "An Address to the Irish People," and "Proposals for an Association of those Philanthropists, etc."

<sup>2</sup> The unpublished "Suggestion" to which Shelley refers in letter No. 128, p. 272.

<sup>3</sup> Which subsequently developed into "Queen Mab ; / a Philosophical Poem : / with notes." / By / Percy Bysshe Shelley. / "Ecrasez l'infame : / Correspondence de Voltaire," / quotations from "Lucretius" and "Archimedes" / London : / Printed by P. B. Shelley, / 23 Chapel Street, Grosvenor Square, / 1813." This poem was finished by February, 1813, and issued privately. Shelley cut out the title-page, dedication (to Harriet) and the imprint at the end of the volume, of many of the copies circulated by him.



*From a miniature, by permission of Messrs. J. M.  
Dent & Co.*

THOMAS LOVE PEACOCK  
at the age of 18





I shall take the liberty of retaining the two poems<sup>1</sup> which you have sent me (Mr. Peacock's), and only regret that my powers are so circumscribed as to prevent me from becoming extensively useful to your friend. The poems abound with a genius, an information, the power and extent of which I admire, in proportion as I lament the object of their application. Mr. Peacock conceives that commerce is prosperity ; that the glory of the British flag is the happiness of the British people ; that George III, so far from having been a warrior and a tyrant, has been a patriot. To me it appears otherwise ; and I have rigidly accustomed myself not to be seduced by the loveliest eloquence or the sweetest strains to regard with intellectual toleration that which ought not to be tolerated by those who love liberty, truth, and virtue. I mean not to say that Mr. Peacock does not love them ; but I mean to say that he regards those means [as] instrumental to their progress, which I regard [as] instrumental to their destruction. (See "Genius of the Thames," pp. 24, 26, 28, 76, 98.) At the same time, I am free to say that the poem appears to be far beyond mediocrity in genius and versification, and the conclusion of "Palmyra" the finest piece of poetry I ever read. I have not had time to read the "Philosophy of Melancholy," and of course am only half-acquainted with that genius and those powers whose application I should consider myself rash and impertinent in criticising, did I not conceive that frankness and justice demand it.

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<sup>1</sup> Apparently the following volumes, "The Genius of the Thames, Palmyra, and other Poems. By T. L. Peacock. The Second Edition. London. Published by T. Hookham, junior, and E. T. Hookham, Old Bond Street. Gale & Curtis, Paternoster Row, and Ballantyne & Co., Edinburgh. 1812," and "The Philosophy of Melancholy, a poem in Four Parts, with a Mythological Ode. By T. L. Peacock, London. Printed by William Bulmer & Co., Shakespeare Press, for T. Hookham, junior, and E. T. Hookham, Old Bond Street, Gale & Curtis, Paternoster Row ; and John Ballantyne & Company, Edinburgh, 1812." The first part of "The Genius of the Thames" and "Palmyra" were originally published respectively in 1810 and 1806.

I should esteem it as a favour if you would present the enclosed letter to the Chevalier Lawrence. I have read his "Empire of the Nairs;"<sup>1</sup> nay, have it. Perfectly and decidedly do I subscribe to the truth of the principles which it is designed to establish.

I hope you will excuse, nay, and doubt not but you will, the frankness I have used. Characters of our liberality are so wondrous rare, that the sooner they know each other, and the fuller and more complete that knowledge is, the better.

Dear Sir, permit me to remain,

Yours very truly,

PERCY B. SHELLEY.

I am about translating an old French work, professedly by M. Mirabaud—not the famous one<sup>2</sup>—"La Systême de la Nature." Do you know anything of it?

[Addressed],

To T. HOOKHAM, Esq.,

Bond Street,

London.

<sup>1</sup> See note on p. 356.

<sup>2</sup> Shelley seems to refer to the French statesman, M. de Mirabeau. The book was by Baron d'Holbach. See note on p. 315.

On August 19, the day after this letter was written, Daniel Healey, Shelley's Irish servant whom he had brought with him from Dublin, was arrested at Barnstaple while distributing and posting up copies of Shelley's "Declaration of Rights." On being brought before the Mayor he gave his name as Hill, and stated that a gentleman had given him five shillings to post up and distribute the papers. The Mayor, not satisfied with Healey's account of how he became possessed of the papers, caused inquiries to be made about the man's master, and learnt that Shelley was viewed with suspicion at Lynton and Lymouth. The man was convicted in a fine of £200, and in lieu of payment, to go to jail for six months. Shelley, unable to pay this fine, arranged that for the payment of fifteen shillings a week his man should be granted certain immunities and privileges.—Prof. Dowden's "Life of Shelley," Vol. I, p. 297.

156. TO JOHN WILLIAMS  
(Tremadoc)

ST. JAMES'S COFFEE-HOUSE, LONDON,<sup>1</sup>

Nov[ember] 7, 1812.

MY DEAR WILLIAMS,

I received your long and kind letter, and although press of business does not permit me to answer to its length, I do hope that it may not be considered deficient in kindness. I need not assure you of the pleasure which I receive from the intelligence of the safety and success of the embankment, of the honourable perseverance of the men, or your own good hopes and spirits. You know my feelings on all these things. I have too often expressed my unabated and unconquerable ardour for the success of you and your enterprises to need repetition now.

On Thursday [November 12] next we set out for Tanyrallt and expect to be with you on the ensuing Monday [November 16]. The Duke of Norfolk has just returned to London. I shall call upon him this morning, and shall spare no pains in engaging his interests, or perhaps his better feelings, in ours and our country's cause.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Shelley, probably aware that he was being watched at Lymouth, had hastily left that place, apparently towards the end of August, and crossing the Bristol Channel at length settled near Tremadoc, in a house called Tan-yr-allt. This house had been built by William Alexander Madocks (1774-1824), M.P. for Boston, who let it to Shelley at a considerable rent, but on easy terms. Mr. Madocks had reclaimed from the sea a large tract of marsh land in Carnarvonshire, upon which he had built a new town, named Tremadoc, after its enterprising founder. At the time of Shelley's visit to this town the embankment which was being built to protect it was in danger of destruction by the sea. Shelley at once became keenly interested in the fate of the embankment, and not only proceeded to canvass the district for subscriptions, heading the list with a sum of £100, but he went up to London with his wife, Eliza Westbrook and Miss Hitchener, to forward his object. Shelley's object in seeing the Duke of Norfolk was to solicit a subscription for the Tremadoc embankment. Hogg says that he was informed that the Duke politely answered that he had no funds at his immediate disposal.—"Life of Shelley," Vol. II, p. 173. During this

I see no hope of effecting, on my part, any grand or decisive scheme until the expiration of my minority. In Sussex I meet with no encouragement. They are a parcel of cold, selfish, and calculating animals, who seem to have no other aim or business, on earth, but to eat, drink, and sleep; but in the meanwhile my fervid hopes, my ardent desires, my unremitting personal exertions (so far as my health will allow), are all engaged in that cause, which I will desert *but with my life*. Can you hire a trustworthy under manservant, as we shall require three in all? Believe me, I feel the attention of the Nanney family very deeply.

Harriet is now writing to Mrs. Madocks to express her sense of her kindness. I do think that your country owes more than I can express to the disinterestedness and activity and patriotism of that admirable lady.

Harriet and the ladies unite with me in sincerest best wishes, and believe me,

Your true friend,

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

P.S.—I am much better than when you last saw me. If I can manage to-day I shall call on the Doctor. Mr. Bedwell will settle the £70 affair.

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visit of Shelley to London, he was reconciled to his friend Hogg. At the beginning of November, he called unexpectedly on Hogg at his chambers in the Temple one evening at ten o'clock.

Some three weeks after the Shelleys had left Lynmouth, William Godwin arrived at that place with the object of paying a visit to his young friend. In a letter from Lynmouth to his wife, dated September 19, 1812, Godwin tells her that "The Shelleys are gone! have been gone these three weeks. . . . I have been to the house where Shelley lodged, and I bring good news. I saw the woman of the house [Mrs. Hooper] and I was delighted with her. She is a good creature, and quite loved the Shelleys. They lived here nine weeks and three days. They went away in a great hurry, in debt to her and two more. They gave her a draft upon the Honourable Mr. Lawless, brother to Lord Cloncurry, and they borrowed of her twenty-nine shillings, besides £3 that she got for them from a neighbour, all of which they faithfully returned when they got to Ilfracombe, the people not choosing to change a bank note which had been cut in half for safety in sending it by the post. But the best news is that the woman



HARRIET SHELLEY TO CATHERINE NUGENT

LEWIS'S HOTEL, ST. JAMES'S STREET, LONDON.

Undated. ? 1812.

MY DEAR MRS. NUGENT,

You will smile at my address, wondering how and where we have been during the long interval which has taken place since the receipt of your last letter. I believe I mentioned that we were going to the Vale of Langollen there to remain at least for the winter season; but I know not how it is that whenever we fix upon any particular place of residence something comes to take us to another. Instead of going to Langollen we went to a New town which is called Tremadoc. It is built upon land that has been saved from the sea by a Mr. Madocks, M.P. for Boston. The character of this man is such as to call forth our warmest admiration and esteem. He is what we call a true *patriot* in every sense of the word. He loves his country dearly, and always stands up for the interests and welfare of the poor. He is building an embankment which does honour to him and is an ornament to his country; but unfortunately possessing only a small fortune, when compared with the immense sums that others possess, he has not sufficient to finish the undertaking which has cost him 12 years' hard labour. We came up to London in the hopes of raising a subscription that would finish it; but as yet nothing is done. Bysshe's being a minor lays us under many unpleasant affairs, and makes us obliged to depend upon in a great measure the will of others, in the manner of raising money, and without which nothing is to be done. We have seen the Godwins.<sup>1</sup> Need I tell you that I love them all? You have read his works, therefore you know how you feel towards the author. His manners are so soft and pleasing that I defy even an enemy to be displeased with him. We have the pleasure of seeing him daily, and upon his account we determine to settle near London. For long journeys do not agree with him, having never been in the habit of travelling when a young man. There is one of the daughters [Fanny Imlay] of that dear Mary Wolstoncroft [*sic*] living with him. She is 19 years of age, very plain, but very sensible. The beauty of her mind fully overbalances the plainness of her countenance. There is another daughter of hers, who is now in Scotland. She is very much like her mother, whose picture hangs up in his study. She must have been a most lovely woman. Her countenance speaks her a woman who would dare to think and act for herself. I wish

says they will be in London in a fortnight. This quite comforts my heart." ("Shelley Memorials," pp. 41-2.) In the following letters, Harriet tells her friend about Tremadoc, gives her impressions of the Godwins, and describes how Shelley managed to shake off Miss Hitchener.

<sup>1</sup> Mary Godwin had been in Scotland on a visit to her friends the Baxters since June, 1812. She returned home, however, by Oct. 10, and on the following day the Shelleys dined at the Godwins' when it is possible Shelley may have first seen his future wife.

you could share the pleasure we enjoy in her company. He is quite a family man. He has one son by his present wife, a little boy of nine years old. He is extremely clever, and will, I have no doubt, follow the same enlightened path that Godwin has before him. Godwin is particularly fond of Curran and I am to be introduced to him (Curran) on Sunday. How comes he [(paper torn)] in England, can you solve this [problem]? You know that Mrs. Godwin keeps a [bookseller's] shop. She conducts the whole herself. [I am] in great hopes she will succeed. They are sometimes very much pressed for enough ready money. They require such an immense capital; but taking everything as it goes, I think they will succeed. The many trials that Mrs. Godwin has had to encounter makes me very much inclined to believe her a woman of great fortitude and unyielding temper of mind. There is a very great sweetness marked in her countenance. In many instances she has shown herself a woman of very great magnanimity and independence of character. Oh, if you could see them all to-morrow. I am going to stay all day with them. G. is very much taken with Percy. He seems to delight so much in his society. He has given up everything for the sake of our society. It gives me so much pleasure to sit and look at him. Have you ever seen a bust of Socrates, for his head is very much like that? Percy, Bessey and Eliza desire to be remembered most affectionately to you. Percy says he wishes you to go to Stockdale's, and get all his manuscript poems and other pieces. I am afraid you will be obliged to use a little manœuvre to get them. In the first place, you can say you wish to look at them, and then you may be able to steal them away from him. I leave it all to you, knowing you will do your best in the way to obtain them, and believe me ever most sincerely your attached friend,

H. SHELLEY.

P.S.—If I have said anything wrong pray forgive me.

[Addressed outside],

Mrs. NUGENT,

No. 101 Grafton Street,  
Dublin, Ireland.

HARRIET SHELLEY TO CATHERINE NUGENT

STRATFORD-UPON-AVON,

November 14 [1812].

MY DEAR MRS. NUGENT,

My last letter to you was from London, which place I left on Friday the 13th, and am now in my way to Tanyralt, our beautiful Welsh cottage. The reason of your silence I am at a loss to account for, unless your answer has not been delivered to me, a circumstance not at all impossible, considering the hotel we lodged at. Do not think from this that we were backward in our enquiries every day respecting letters. They are and always will be the first objects of our solicitude, when coming from so dear a friend as yourself.

The lady I have so often mentioned to you, of the name of Hitchener, has to our very great happiness left us. We were entirely deceived in her character as to her republicanism, and in short everything else which she pretended to be. We were not long in finding out our great disappointment in her. As to any noble disinterested views, it is utterly impossible for a selfish character to feel them. She built all her hopes on being able to separate me from my dearly loved Percy, and had the artfulness to say that Percy was really in love with her, and was only his being married that could keep her within bounds. Now Percy had seen her twice before his marriage. He thought her sensible but nothing more. She wrote continually, and at last I wrote to her, and was very much charmed with her letters. We thought it a thousand pities that such a mind as hers appeared to be should be left in a place like that she inhabited. We were therefore very urgent for her to come and live with us ; which was no sooner done than we found out our mistake. It was a long time ere we could possibly get her away, till at last Percy said he would give her £100 per annum. And now, thank God, she has left us never more to return. We are much happier now than all the time she was with us. Have you been able to get the poems from Stockdale ? If not it cannot be helped, but do pray write to us, for we are quite uneasy at not hearing from you for so long a time. Direct your letters to me at Tanyrallt, near the town of Tremadoc (in Carnarvonshire, North Wales). It is 260 miles from London, but the loveliest place I have seen many a day. We are not far from Ireland. If you could so manage it as to come to us in the Spring, you know not the happiness you would confer upon our little circle, which is now just as you beheld it in your own native air. I have got the Irish Melodies, which I intend to study. If you know of any good old Irish song I should esteem it a favor to hear of it. I must now say adieu, and believe me most truly your affectionate friend,

H. S.

Percy and Eliza desire not to be forgotten.

[Addressed outside],

Mrs. NUGENT,

No. 101 Grafton Street,  
Dublin, Ireland.

157. TO MRS. HOOPER  
(Lynmouth)

LONDON,

December [ ? November ] 19, 1812.

DEAR MRS. HOOPER,

I send you £20, out of the debt of £30 that I owe you.  
The remainder I will send as soon as I can.

Your well-wisher,

P. B. SHELLEY.



## 158. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG

TANYRALLT [TREMADOC],

Dec[ember] 3, 1812.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Your letter begins with the Duke of Norfolk.<sup>1</sup> I stared, when I saw his name ; from the very moment I parted from you to the moment of the receipt of your letter, I had thought no more of the Duke of Norfolk than of the man in the moon. I will this instant sit down, and do penance for my involuntary crime by writing a long and wheedling letter to his Grace, and you shall be duly informed of the success of the experiment. I have no hopes, however, of bending my father, but by the mere force of gross interest, and therefore suppose it equally impossible, that he should come to terms before I am of age, as that he should hold out at the expiration of my minority. Be it as it may, I will give him a fair chance, I will put on my most good-humoured and conciliatory countenance, which Heaven knows, will in this case have something of the Grimgriffinhoff in it after all. When I see him, though I shall say the civilest things imaginable, yet I shall not look as if I liked him, because I do not like him.

You think that, because your reasonings on the subject of moral and political science have led you wide of me, you are regarded by me with less complacency ; but good intention is the essence of merit, and any qualification so involuntary as belief, or opinion, is surely a defective standard by which to measure out esteem. It is only

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<sup>1</sup> Shelley was apparently very short of money, and had perhaps applied for a loan to Hogg, who suggested that he should write to the Duke. In an unpublished letter to John Williams at Ynys Towy, dated Dec. 4, 1812, Shelley says : “. . . not having sixpence of ready money, I am placed in a most awkward situation by this mistake.”



when conviction is influenced by debasing and unworthy motives, that it becomes in any degree criminal.

Of such motives I do not accuse you, and you appear tainted with some portion of that illiberality, of which you indirectly accuse me, by the very spirit of suspicion, which produces that accusation.

You misinterpret my feelings on the state of the moral-world, when you suppose that the bigotry of commonplace republicanism, or the violence of faction, enters into them at all.

I certainly am a very resolved republican (if the word applies), and a determined sceptic ; but although I think their reasonings very defective, I am clearly aware that the noblest feelings might conduct some few reflecting minds to Aristocracy and Episcopacy. Hume certainly was an aristocrat, and Locke was a zealous Christian.

The "Brown Demon,"<sup>1</sup> as we call our late tormentor and schoolmistress, must receive her stipend. I pay it with a heavy heart and an unwilling hand ; but it must be so. She was deprived by our misjudging haste of a situation, where she was going on smoothly : and now she says that her reputation is gone, her health ruined, her peace of mind destroyed by my barbarity ; a complete victim to all the woes mental and bodily, that heroine ever suffered ! This is not all fact ; but certainly she is embarrassed and poor, and we being in some degree the cause, we ought to obviate it. She is an artful, superficial, ugly, hermaphroditical beast of a woman, and my astonishment at my fatuity, inconsistency, and bad taste was never so great, as after living four months with her as an inmate. What would Hell be, were such a woman in Heaven ?

The society in Wales is very stupid. They are all aristocrats and saints : but that, I tell you, I do not mind in the least : the unpleasant part of the business is, that they hunt people to death, who are not so likewise.

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<sup>1</sup> Poor Miss Elizabeth Hitchener, who seems, from an entry in Godwin's diary, to have left the Shelleys on or before November 8.

Miss Westbrook is perfectly well. Harriet unites with me in wishing you all possible good, and I am your very sincere friend,

PERCY B. SHELLEY.

Write soon, for your letters amuse us ALL.

159. TO THOMAS HOOKHAM

(Old Bond Street)

[TANYRALLT, NEAR TREMADOC,

CARNARVONSHIRE,

Dec[ember] 3, 1812.]

The parcel of books is not yet arrived. I own I am rather anxious concerning it, as the irregularity of the coaches to this solitude among mountains frequently causes mistakes. I have read Mr. Peacock's verses. Independently of their poetical merit, they are accurately descriptive of the exquisite souls by whom I am encompassed. Bigotry is so universally pervading, that the best are deeply tainted. I was speaking of Mr. Peacock to a lady<sup>1</sup> who knew him during his residence in Wales. In many respects she is a woman of considerable merit, and, except in religious matters, a model of toleration. "Oh!" she said, "there Mr. Peacock lived in a cottage near Tan-y-bwlch, associating with no one, and hiding his head, like a murderer, but," she added, altering her voice to a tone of appropriate gravity, "he was *worse than that*, he was an atheist!" I exclaimed much against the intolerance of her remark, without producing the slightest effect. She knows very well that I am an infidel; but perhaps *she does not do me justice!* There is more philosophy in one square inch of any tradesman's counter than in the whole of Cambria. It is the last stronghold of the most vulgar and commonplace prejudices of aristocracy. Lawyers of unexampled villainy rule and grind the poor, whilst they

<sup>1</sup> Probably the lady was Mrs. Madocks, the wife of Shelley's landlord. Mr. Madocks was absent from Tremadoc during the period of Shelley's stay at Tanyrallt.

cheat the rich. The peasants are mere serfs, and are fed and lodged worse than pigs. The gentry have all the ferocity and despotism of the ancient barons, without their dignity and chivalric disdain of shame and danger. The poor are as abject as samoyads, and the rich as tyrannical as bashaws.

## 160. TO FANNY IMLAY

[TANYRALLT],

Dec[ember] 10, 1812.

DEAR FANNY,

So you do not know whether it is *proper* to write to me? Now, one of the most conspicuous considerations that arise from such a topic is—who and what am I? I am one of those formidable and long-clawed animals called a *man*, and it is not until I have assured you that I am one of the most inoffensive of my species, that I live on vegetable food, and never bit since I was born, that I venture to obtrude myself on your attention. But to be serious. I shall feel much satisfaction in replying, with as much explicitness as my nature is capable of, to any questions you may put to me. I know that I have in some degree forfeited a direct claim on your confidence and credit, and that of your inestimable circle; but if you will believe me as much as you can, I will be as sincere as I can. I certainly am convinced that, with the exception of one or two isolated instances, I am so far from being an insincere man that my plainness has occasionally given offence, and caused some to accuse me of being defective in that urbanity and toleration which is supposed to be due to society. Allow me, in the absence of the topics which are eventually to be discussed between us, to assume the privilege you have claimed, and ask a question. How is Harriet a fine lady? You indirectly accuse her in your letter of this

offence—to me the most unpardonable of all. The ease and simplicity of her habits, the unassuming plainness of her address, the uncalculated connection of her thought and speech, have ever formed in my eyes her greatest charms ; and none of these are compatible with fashionable life, or the attempted assumption of its vulgar and noisy *éclat*. You have a prejudice to contend with in making me a convert to this last opinion of yours, which, so long as I have a living and daily witness to its futility before me, I fear will be insurmountable. The second accusation (the abruptness of our departure) has more foundation, though in its spirit it is not less false and futile than the first. It must, indeed, I confess it, have appeared insensible and unfeeling, it must have appeared an ill return for all the kind greetings we had received at your house, to leave it in haste and coldness—to leave even the enlightened and zealous benevolence of Godwin ever [active] for good, and never deterred or discouraged in schemes for rectifying our perplexed affairs—to bid not one adieu to one of you ; but, had you been placed in a situation where you might justly have balanced all our embarrassments, qualms and fluctuations, had seen the opposite motives combating in our minds for mastery, had felt some tithe of the pain with which at length we submitted to a galling yet unappealable necessity, you would have sympathized rather than condemned, have pitied rather than criminated, us unheard. Say the truth : did not a sense of the injustice of our supposed unkindness add some point to the sarcasms which we found occasionally in your last letter ? . . .

If all my laughs were not dreadful, Sardonic grins, disgraceful to the most hideous of Cheshire cats, I should certainly laugh at two things in your last letter. The one is, “ not knowing whether it is proper to write to me,” lest—God knows what might happen ; and the other is, comparing our movement to that of a modern novel. Now a novel (modern or ancient) never moves but as the reader moves, and I, being a reader, if I take up one of these



similitudes of our progress, never can get beyond the third line in the second page ; therefore you ought rather to have compared a novel to a snail rather than to us.

Now, my dear Fanny, do not be angry at either my laughs, my criticisms, or my queries. They proceed from levity, my proper view of things, and my desire of setting them before you in what I consider a right light.

Your questions shall be answered with precision ; and, if hope in my quality as a man be not too tremendous, I shall acquire from the result an interesting and valuable correspondent.

With much esteem, your true friend,

P. B. SHELLEY.

To Miss FANNY GODWIN.<sup>1</sup>

# 161. TO CLIO RICKMAN

(London)

TANYRALLT, TREMADOC, CARNARVONSHIRE, NORTH WALES,

December 24, 1812.

SIR,

In a letter which I received from you on a different subject, you expressed your willingness to receive my orders.—I am now in want of some books, a list of which I enclose, and I prefer employing a countryman, and a man of a liberal and enlightened mind, to a stranger.—I should wish for such editions of the classics I have mentioned as have translations subjoined ; or, if such are not obtainable, translations separate.—I prefer them in the cheapest form.

Sir, I remain,

Your very ob[edien]t s[ervan]t,

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

P.S.—If the box which contains the books is sent to

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<sup>1</sup> Fanny Imlay went by the name of Godwin. See the biographical note at the beginning of Vol. I.

Mr. Bedwell, 6 Tooley St., Canterbury Square, Southwark,  
it will reach me safely (directed as above).

Turn over.

I would prefer the books in boards.

[Addressed outside],

Mr. CLIO RICKMAN,

Bookseller,

No. 7 Upper Marylebone St., London.

[Postmark], 28. 12. 1812. [The seal bears the word] Liberty.

Original and translation,  
if possible, united—

Æschylus  
Epicurus  
Celsus  
Ptolemæus  
Confusius (a translation only)  
Euripides  
Polybius  
Tacitus  
Procopius  
Hippocrates  
Diodorus Siculus  
Lucius Florus  
Justin of Samaria (the original  
only)  
Pythagoras  
Theophrastus  
Titus Livius  
Josephus  
Sappho

Shakespeare's works (cheap  
edition)  
Cowley's works  
Blackstone's "Commentaries"  
Sir W. Jones's works  
Lord Monboddo "on the origin  
and progress of language"  
Robertson's "History of  
Scotland"  
do. "History of America"

Robertson's "Historical Disqui-  
sition on India"  
Bishop Berkeley's works  
Garcilaso de la Vega  
Spallanzani's works (either  
English or Italian)  
Les Ouvres de Diderot  
do. do. Condorcet  
Roscoe's "History of the Houses  
of Medicis"  
Sir W. Drummond's Essay on a  
Punic Inscription"  
Darwin's "Temple of Nature"  
Trotter on "Nervous Tempera-  
ment"  
do. "Essay on "Drunken-  
ness"

Poems by Clio Rickman  
"Metrical Tales" by Southey  
Southey's "Thalaba"  
Wordsworth's Poems, 4 vols.  
Coleridge's Poems  
Tooke's "Diversions of Purley"  
Godwin's "Enquirer"  
do. "Caleb Williams"  
do. "St. Leon"  
do. "Fleetwood"

162. TO THOMAS HOOKHAM  
(Old Bond Street)

TANYRALLT, [TREMADOC],  
Dec[ember] 17, 1812.

MY DEAR SIR,

You will receive the "Biblical Extracts"<sup>1</sup> in a day or two by the twopenny post. I confide them to the care of a person going to London. Would not Daniel I. Eaton publish them? Could the question be asked him in any manner?

I am also preparing a volume of minor poems, respecting whose publication I shall request your judgment, both as publisher and friend. A very obvious question would be—Will they sell or not? Subjoined is a list of books which I wish you to send me very soon. I am determined to apply myself to a study that is hateful and disgusting to my very soul, but which is, above all studies, necessary for him who would be listened to as a mender of antiquated abuses. I mean that record of crimes and miseries, History. You see that the metaphysical works to which my heart hankers are not numerous in this list. One thing will you take care of for me—that those standard and respectable works on history, etc., be of the cheapest possible editions. With respect to metaphysical works, I am less scrupulous.

Spinoza<sup>2</sup> you may or may not be able to obtain. Kant is translated into Latin by some Englishman. I would prefer that the Greek classics should have Latin or English

<sup>1</sup> The "Biblical Extracts" has never been published. Daniel I. Eaton was the publisher whom Shelley defended in his letter to Lord Ellenborough. See note on p. 323.

<sup>2</sup> Professor Dowden quotes the following from this list ("Life of Shelley," Vol. I, p. 336):—Kant, Spinoza, Hume's "Essays," Darwin's "Zoonomia," Herodotus, Thucydides, Xenophon, and Plutarch [these four recommended by Godwin], with translations into Latin or English, as well as the original texts. Gillies "History of Greece," Vertot's (French) "Histoire de la Rome" ["Revolution romaines"], Gibbon's "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," Adolphus's "History of England from the Accession of George III to 1783," Spenser's "Faerie Queene," Count Rumford "On Stoves,"

versions printed opposite. If not to be obtained thus, they must be sent otherwise.

Do you know anything of the famous French Encyclopédie composed by Voltaire, D'Alembert, etc.? It is a book I should much wish to have. Is it to be obtained? Could you obtain it? . . . There is a work by a French physician, Cabanis, that I wish you also to send.

Mrs. Shelley is attacking Latin with considerable resolution, and can already read many odes in Horace. She unites with her sister and myself in best wishes to yourself and brother.

Your very sincere friend,

P. B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed],

T. HOOKHAM, Esq.,  
15 Bond Street, London.

### 163. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG

TANYRALLT [TREMADOC],

Dec[ember] 27, 1812.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Your letter to Harriet contains some hints of the possibility of your being at leisure in a short time. I sincerely hope that your schemes will allow a visit to Tanyrallt. The advantage of a mail within seventeen miles would entirely obviate any hitch in the affair. We all anxiously wish you would come, and hope that your hint was something better than a mere lure for the opportunity of refusal.

We are all surprised at the complaints of cold which issue from London. For a day or two, indeed, it bit a little in the first of the morning, but nothing more.

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Moor's "Hindu Pantheon," Southey's "History of Brazil." Hogg says ("Life of Shelley," Vol. II, p. 178) that on Dec. 21, 1812, Shelley writes to London for "Marcus Antoninus, Seneca, and Plato." Professor Dowden suggests the fragment containing this request to have been written on Dec. 17, after Shelley had posted the above letter to Hookham.



Believe me that I sympathize in your feelings on Buonaparte and Peace, very warmly. Buonaparte is a person to whom I have a very great objection ; he is to me a hateful and despicable being. He is seduced by the grossest and most vulgar ambition into actions which only differ from those of pirates by virtue of the number of men and the variety of resources under his command. His talents appear to me altogether contemptible and commonplace ; incapable as he is of comparing connectedly the most obvious propositions, or relishing any pleasure truly enrapturing. Excepting Lord Castlereagh, you could not have mentioned any character but Buonaparte whom I condemn and abhor more vehemently. With respect to those victories in the North ; if they tend towards peace, they are good ; if otherwise, they are bad. This is the standard by which I shall ultimately measure my approbation of them. At the same time, I cannot but say that the first impression which they made on me was one of horror and regret.<sup>1</sup>

Brougham's defence was certainly not so good as it might have been ; it was fettered by the place wherein he stood. Entire liberty of speech was denied. He could not speak treason ; he could not commit a libel ; and therefore his client was not to be defended on the basis of moral truth. He was compelled to hesitate when truth was rising to his lips ; he could utter that which he did utter only by circumlocution and irony. The speech of the Solicitor-General appeared to me the consummation of all shameless insolence, and the address of Lord Ellenborough so barefaced a piece of timeservingness, that I am sure his heart must have laughed at his lips as he pronounced it.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The *Examiner* for Dec. 20, 1812, says : " If the Russian Bulletins are to be believed, Buonaparte has not now a corporal's guard left out of his whole ' grand army,' and they are without shoes, according to the ministerial papers. Considering that Napoleon and his army have been so completely surrounded by the Russians, the news of their capture is rather tardy in its arrival."

<sup>2</sup> On Wednesday, Dec, 9, 1812, in the Court of King's Bench,

I have as yet received no answer from the Duke of Norfolk. I scarcely expect one. I do not see that it is the interest of my father to come to terms during my non-age ; perhaps even not after. Do you know, I cannot prevail upon myself to care much about it. Harriet is very happy as we are ; and I am very happy. I question if intimacy with my relations would add at all to our tranquillity. They would be plotting and playing the devil, or showing us to some people who would do so ; or they would be dull ; or they would take stupid likes or dislikes, and they certainly might cramp our liberty of movement. In fact, I have written to the Duke. I can say to my conscience, " I have done my best ; " but I shall not be very unhappy, if I fail.

I continue vegetable ; Harriet means to be slightly animal, until the arrival of Spring. My health is much improved by it ; though partly perhaps by my removal from your nerve-racking and spirit-quelling metropolis.

We are divided between two opinions : Whether you

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John Hunt, the printer, and Leigh Hunt, the Editor of the *Examiner* newspaper, were charged before Lord Ellenborough and a special jury " With intention to traduce and vilify his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, Regent of the United Kingdom, and to bring his Royal Highness into hatred, contempt and disgrace on the 22nd of March [1812] in the 52nd year of the King, published a libel against the Prince Regent." Then followed a passage quoted from the *Examiner* article entitled " The Prince on St. Patrick's Day," in which certain phrases of unmeasured panegyric applied to the Prince Regent in the Tory press, appeared with Leigh Hunt's unflattering comments, concluding with the following : " . . . This Adonis in Loveliness was a corpulent gentleman of fifty ! In short, that this delightful, blissful, wise, pleasurable, honourable, virtuous, true, and immortal PRINCE was a violator of his word, a libertine over head and ears in debt and disgrace, a despiser of domestic ties, the companion of gamblers and demireps, a man who has just closed half a century without one single claim on the gratitude of his country or the respect of posterity." Although ably defended by their friend Brougham, who had succeeded in obtaining an acquittal of the Hunts on a previous government prosecution, in 1811, he was prohibited, from the nature of the case, from producing any proofs on behalf of his clients, and they were pronounced guilty, sentence being deferred.

really will allow us the heartfelt pleasure of seeing you here this winter : or whether your suggestion was a quiz.

My dear friend, I remain,

Yours very affectionately,

PERCY B. SHELLEY.

164. TO THOMAS HOOKHAM

(Old Bond Street)

TANYRALLT [TREMADOC],

January 2, 1813.

MY DEAR SIR,

On reflection, I feel rather chagrined that I excepted against the Georgics. I fear it may withhold your hand, when you would otherwise send me some really valuable work. I assure you I am quite reconciled to Professor Martyn.<sup>1</sup> Harriet will probably derive some assistance from his translation, when she has mastered Horace. Now to answer your questions. The "Tractatus Theologico politicus" and the "Opera Posthuma" of Spinoza will fully suffice, at least, for the present. With respect to Kant, there is a work of his, and, as I judged, the only one, which has been translated into Latin by some Dr. This, which is his most celebrated work, is the only one I require ; and I have no choice between a Latin, a French, or an English translation. My poems will, I fear, little stand the criticism even of friendship, some of the later ones have the merit of conveying a meaning in every word, and all are faithful pictures of my feelings at the time of writing them. But they are, in a great measure, abrupt and obscure—all breathing hatred of Government and religion, but, I think, not too openly for publication. One fault they are indisputably exempt from, that of being a volume

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Thomas Martyn (*d.* 1816), Physician at Chelsea, and Professor of Botany at Cambridge, author of "Dissertations and Critical Remarks on the *Æneids* of Virgil, with a life of the author," 1770.

of *fashionable literature*. I doubt not but your friendly hand will clip the wings of my Pegasus considerably. I think that the type and size of Godwin's "Essay on Sepulchres" would be a good model for the "Biblical Extracts." At all events I would wish them to be sent to the press. If you cannot have access to Eaton 250 copies would suffice. Small Christmas, or *Easter offerings* of a neat little book have frequently a surprising effect. The Emperors of China seem to form a singular exception to the usual doltishness of the regal race.<sup>1</sup> I sympathize with his Imperial Majesty, but might not a preface be as efficacious in preventing the circulation of Biblical poison as a penal law?

Accept my warmest thanks for your kindness respecting the money affair—I may in a future letter trouble you with a few more enquiries on the subject. The post is just going out. We hope to see you here early in the spring. Harriet and her sister unite with me in best wishes to yourself and brother.

Yours very truly,  
P. B. SHELLEY.

165. To THOMAS HOOKHAM  
(Old Bond Street)

TANYRALLT, TREMADOC,  
Jan[uary] 16, 1813.

I am provoked by the stupidity of the people who were to send the box. . . .

I certainly wish to have all Kant's works. My question concerning the "Encyclopédie" was more of curiosity than a want.

I expect to have "Queen Mab" and the other Poems

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<sup>1</sup> "In China the circulation of the Old and New Testaments had been proscribed by Imperial Edicts," (Dowden's "Shelley," Vol. I, p. 339.)



finished by March. "Queen Mab" will be in ten cantos,<sup>1</sup> and contain about 2,600 lines. The other poems contain probably as much more. The notes to "Q. M." will be long and philosophical; I shall take that opportunity which I judge to be a safe one, of propagating my principles, which I decline to do syllogistically in poem. A poem very didactic is, I think, very stupid.

I do not think that Sir W. Drummond's arguments have much weight. His "Œdipus [Judaicus]" has completely failed in making me a convert.

P.S. The thermometer is twelve degrees below freezing; this is Russian cold!<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In its published form it is divided into nine cantos and contains 2,289 lines. Prof. Dowden says that "the figures in Shelley's letter are not quite clear, and may be 2,800, which would agree more closely with the statement about the other poems."

<sup>2</sup> On the same date as this note Harriet wrote the following letter to Catherine Nugent—

TANYRALLT,  
Jan[uar]y 16. [1813.]

MY DEAR MRS. NUGENT,

The sight of your well-known hand was like intelligence from the dead to the living. Shall I say that it gave me only pleasure? no, that is too cold a word to convey the feelings of happiness, in which we all alike participated. I am sorry to hear you have been so much engaged, as I cannot bear the idea of a woman like yourself being obliged to do that which so many are better qualified to perform. I saw with very great sorrow the ruin of so many of your valuable manufactories. I knew how many of your unfortunate countrymen suffered all the miseries of famine before, and now there must be many more. That the wounds of thy beloved country may soon be healed for ever, is the first wish of an Englishwoman who only regrets her being born among those inhuman beings who have already caused so much misery wherever they turn their steps. All the good I wrote of Mr. Madocks I recant. I find I have been dreadfully deceived respecting that man. We are now living in his house, where formerly nothing but folly and extravagance reigned. Here they held their midnight revels, insulting the spirit of nature's sublime scenery. The sea which used to dash against the most beautiful and grand rocks, for grand indeed they are, and the mind is lost in the contemplation of them towering above one another, and on the opposite side the most jagged mountains, whose peaks are generally covered in clouds, was, to please his stupid vanity and to celebrate his name, turned from its course, and now we have for a bold fine sea, which there used to be, nothing but a sandy marsh

## 166. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG

TANYRALLT [TREMADOC],

Feb[ruary] 7, 1813.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have been teased to death for the last fortnight. Had you known the variety of the discomfitures I have undergone, you would attribute my silence to anything but unkindness or neglect. I allude to the embankment affairs,<sup>1</sup> in which I thoughtlessly engaged; for when I come

uncultivated and ugly to the view. How poor does this work of man seem when standing on one of the mountains we see them all rising one behind the other as tho' they had stood the iron grasp of time many centuries. Then to look down on this embankment which viewed from the height looks as if a puff of wind from the mountains would send it to oblivion like its founder's name. The harm that man has done through his extravagance is incalculable. Here he built the town of Tremadoc, and then almost ruined its shopkeepers by never paying their just debts. We have been the means of saving the bank from utter destruction, for which I am extremely glad, as that person who purchases it will reap very great benefit from it. I admire your song much, and am determined to set it to some very plaintive tune. I have seen Miss Curran: she resides in England. What I saw of her I did not like. She said begging was a trade in Dublin. To tell you the truth, she is not half such an Irishwoman as myself, and that is why I did not feel disposed to like her. Besides, she is a coquette, the most abominable thing in the world. I met her at Godwin's house, alas [paper torn] Godwin he, too, is changed, and [filled] with prejudices, and besides, too, he expects such universal homage from all persons younger than himself, that it is very disagreeable to be in company with him on that account, and he wanted Mr. Shelley to join the Wig [*sic*] party and do just as they pleased, which made me very angry, as we know what men the Wigs [*sic*] are, now. He is grown old and unimpassioned, therefore is not in the least calculated for such enthusiasts as we are. He has suffered a great deal for his principles, but that ought to make him more staunch in them, at least it would me. Eliza and Percy desire their kindest regards to you, with many thanks for your embassy to Stockdale, who will hear from Mr. S. soon. Adieu, dearest friend to liberty and truth, and that you may ever be happy is the first prayer of your affectionate friend,

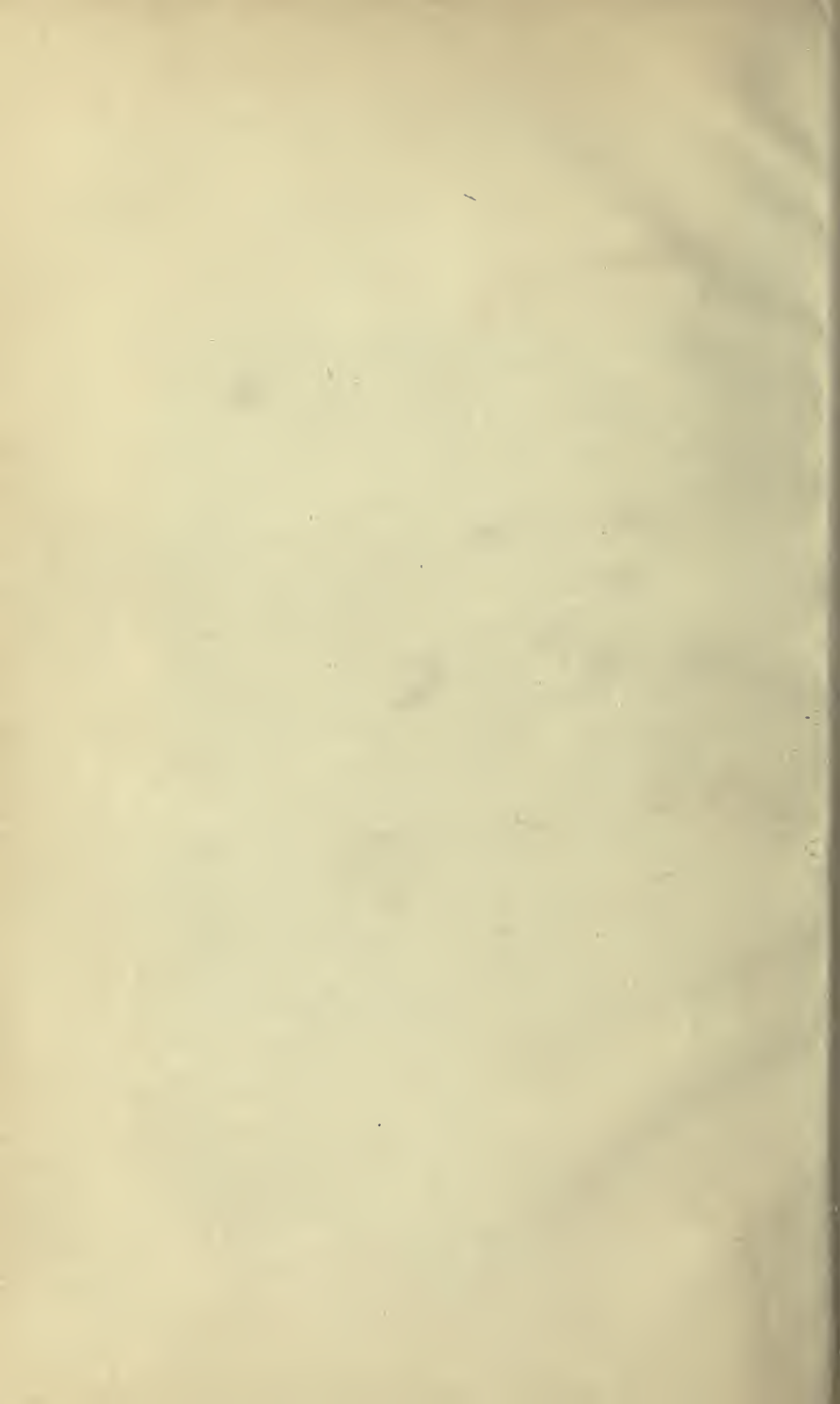
H. SHELLEY.

<sup>1</sup> Shelley's zeal for the "embankment affairs" was such that, according to Mrs. Williams, he helped her husband to write letters, "and was in the office from morning to night, using every means in his power to show his kind interest." (Quoted by Prof. Dowden, Vol. I, 319.) See note on p. 361.



*From a woodcut, by kind permission of Messrs. Kegan Paul, Trench & Co.*

## TANYRALLT, NEAR TREMADOC





home to Harriet, I am the happiest of the happy. I forget whether I have expressed to you the pleasure which you know I must feel at your visit in March.<sup>1</sup> I hope it will be early in the month, and that you will arrange matters so in London, that it may be protracted to the utmost possible length.

We simple people live here in a cottage extensive and tasty enough for the villa of an Italian Prince.<sup>2</sup> The rent, as you may conceive, is large, but it is an object with us that they allow it to remain unpaid till I am of age.

What said Harriet of America?<sup>3</sup>

You must take your place in the mail as far as Capel Cerrig, and inform me of the time you mean to be there, and I will meet you. I do not think that you have ever visited this part of North Wales. The scenery is more strikingly grand in the way from Capel Cerrig to our house than ever I beheld. The road passes at the foot of Snowdon; all around you see lofty mountain peaks, lifting their summits far above the clouds, wildly-wooded valleys below, and dark tarns reflecting every tint and shape of the scenery above them. The roads are tremendously rough; I shall bring a horse for you, as you will then be better able to see the country than when jumbled in a chaise.

"Mab"<sup>4</sup> has gone on but slowly, although she is nearly

<sup>1</sup> Hogg had promised to visit the Shelleys at Tanyralit "during the Spring Circuit, that is to say, at the beginning of March."

<sup>2</sup> Tanyralit is built in the Italian style, or what would now be known as a commodious bungalow with one storey and a verandah.

<sup>3</sup> Did Shelley ever think of going to America? We know that he sympathized with the Mexican Revolution, and he had been told that America was a place where beggars practically were unknown (Letter No. 122). In a letter of C. Kirkpatrick Sharpe, printed in Lady Charlotte Bury's "Diary Illustrative of the Times of George the Fourth," 1838, Vol. I, p. 91, he says in writing from Christ Church, Oxford, Oct., 1811, "The ingenious Mr. Shelley hath been expelled from the University on account of his atheistical pamphlet. Was ever such bad taste and barbarity known? He behaved like a hero, 'he showed to Fortune's frowns a brow serene,' and declared his intention of emigrating to America."

<sup>4</sup> "Queen Mab."

finished. They have teased me out of all poetry. With some restrictions, I have taken your advice, though I have not been able to bring myself to rhyme. The didactic is in blank heroic verse, and the descriptive in blank lyrical measure. If an authority is of any weight in support of this singularity, Milton's "Samson Agonistes," the Greek Choruses, and (you will laugh) Southey's "Thalaba" may be adduced. I have seen your last letter to Harriet. She will answer it by next post. I need not say that your letters delight me, but all your principles do not. The species of pride which you love to encourage appears to me incapable of bearing the test of reason. Now, do not tell me that Reason is a cold and insensible arbiter. Reason is only an assemblage of our better feelings—passion considered under a peculiar mode of its operation. This chivalric pride, although of excellent use in an age of Vandalism and brutality, is unworthy of the nineteenth century. A more elevated spirit has begun to diffuse itself, which, without deducting from the warmth of love, or the constancy of friendship, reconciles all private feelings to public utility, and scarce suffers true Passion and true Reason to continue at war. Pride mistakes a desire of being esteemed for that of being really estimable. I scarce think that the mock humility of ecclesiastical hypocrisy is more degrading and blind. I remember when over our Oxford fire we used to discuss various subjects; fancy me present with you in spirit, and own "how vain is human pride!" Perhaps you will say that my Republicanism is proud; it certainly is far removed from pot-house democracy, and knows with what smile to hear the servile applauses of an inconsistent mob. But though its cheeks could feel without a blush the hand of insult strike, its soul would shrink neither from the scaffold nor the stake, nor from those deeds and habits which are obnoxious to slaves in power. My Republicanism, it is true, would bear with an aristocracy of chivalry and refinement before an aristocracy of commerce and vulgarity; not, however, from

pride, but because the one I consider as approaching most nearly to what man ought to be. So much for Pride!

Since I wrote the above, I have finished the rough sketch of my poem. As I have not abated an iota of the infidelity or cosmopolity of it, sufficient will remain, exclusively of innumerable faults, invisible to partial eyes, to make it very unpopular. Like all egotists, I shall console myself with what I may call, if I please, the suffrages of the chosen few, who can think and feel, or of those friends whose personal partialities may blind them to all defects. I mean to subjoin copious philosophical notes.

Harriet has a bold scheme of writing you a Latin letter. If you have an Ovid's "Metamorphoses,"<sup>1</sup> she will thank you to bring it. I do not teach her grammatically, but by the less laborious method of teaching her the English of Latin words, intending afterwards to give her a general idea of grammar. She unites with me in all kindest wishes.

#### 167. TO THOMAS HOOKHAM<sup>2</sup>

(Old Bond Street)

[TANYRALLT, NEAR TREMADOC],

[Postmark], 19 February, 1813.

MY DEAR SIR,

I am boiling with indignation at the horrible injustice and tyranny of the sentence pronounced on Hunt and his brother; and it is on this subject that I write to you. Surely the seal of abjectness and slavery is indelibly stamped upon the character of England.

Although I do not retract in the slightest degree my wish for a subscription for the widows and children of those

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<sup>1</sup> Shelley's copy of Ovid's "Metamorphoses," with his signature on the title-page is in the collection of Mr. H. B. Forman.

<sup>2</sup> This letter has been reconstructed from the imperfect (?) copy printed in "Shelley Memorials," and the extracts in Hogg's "Life of Shelley."



poor men hung at York,<sup>1</sup> yet this £1,000 which the Hunts are sentenced to pay is an affair of more consequence. Hunt is a brave, a good, and an enlightened man. Surely the public, for whom Hunt has done so much, will repay in part the great debt of obligation which they owe the champion of their liberties and virtues ; or are they dead, cold, stone-hearted, and insensible—brutalized by centuries of unremitting bondage ? However that may be, they surely may be excited into some slight acknowledgment of his merits. Whilst hundreds of thousands are sent to the tyrants of Russia, he pines in a dungeon, far from all that can make life desired.

Well, I am rather poor at present ; but I have £20 which is not immediately wanted. Pray, begin a subscription for the Hunts ; put down my name for that sum, and, when I hear that you have complied with my request, I will send it you.<sup>2</sup> Now if there are any difficulties in the way of this scheme of ours, for the love of liberty and virtue, overcome them. Oh ! that I might wallow for one night in the Bank of England !

You would very much oblige me if you would collect all possible documents on the Procession of the Equinoxes,

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<sup>1</sup> Prof. Dowden says that " when in Jan., 1813, the execution of fourteen of the riotous frame-makers known as Luddites took place at York, Shelley and Harriet were eager to start a subscription in London for the destitute widows and orphans of the victims. " Put down my sister's name, Mr. Shelley's, and mine for two guineas each," wrote Harriet to Hookham, " if this meets your approbation, and we will enclose the sum."—(" Life of Shelley," Vol. I, 323.)

<sup>2</sup> Lord Ellenborough had passed sentence on Leigh and John Hunt, on Feb. 4, 1812, of a fine of £500 each, imprisonment of two years, John Hunt in Coldbath Field, and Leigh Hunt in the Surrey County Jail, and at the expiration of that term each were to give a security, in £500 each and two sufficient securities in £250, for their good behaviour during five years. The Hunts, however, refused to accept any assistance and paid the fine. Shelley not only proposed this subscription, but he also wrote to Leigh Hunt, for he tells us in his " Autobiography " : " It was [this] imprisonment that brought me acquainted with my friend of friends, Shelley. I had seen little of him before ; but he wrote to me making me a princely offer, which at the time I stood in no need of."



as also anything that may throw light upon the question of, whether or not the position of the Earth on its poles is not yearly becoming less oblique. It is an astronomical affair.

"Queen Mab" is finished and transcribed. I am now preparing the notes, which shall be long and philosophical. You will receive it with the other poems. I think that the whole should form one volume; but of that we can speak hereafter.

As to the French "Encyclopédie," it is a book which I am desirous—very desirous—of possessing; and, if you could get me a few months' credit (being at present rather low in cash), I should very much desire to have it. How long will the poems be printing after they have been received?

My dear sir, excuse the earnestness of the first part of my letter. I feel warmly on this subject, and I flatter myself that, so long as your own independence and liberty remain uncompromised you are inclined to second my desires.

Your very sincere friend,

P. B. SHELLEY.

P.S.—If no other way can be devised for this subscription, will you take the trouble on yourself of writing an appropriate advertisement for the papers, inserting, by way of stimulant, my subscription?

On second thoughts, I enclose the £20.

168. TO THOMAS HOOKHAM  
(London)

[TANYRALLT, TREMADOC,  
March 3, 1813.]

DEAR SIR,

I have just escaped an atrocious assassination.<sup>1</sup> Oh,

<sup>1</sup> The assault on Shelley referred to in this letter (on the night of Friday, Feb. 26), and related in detail by Harriet Shelley in her letter to Hookham of March 11, 1813, p. 391, remained for ninety-two

send £20 if you have it ! You will perhaps hear of me no more !

Your friend,

PERCY SHELLEY.

Mr. Shelley is so dreadfully nervous to-day, from being

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years one of the inexplicable incidents of the poet's life, and was variously described by his biographers as either an hallucination of Shelley's brain or a trick to escape from his creditors at Tremadoc. To the *Century Magazine* for Oct., 1905, however, Miss Margaret L. Crofts contributed the following well attested account of Shelley's adventure. It appears that "Shelley was in the habit of climbing up the Roman steps near Tanyrallt to the rocky height, which was a grazing place for sheep. Here Shelley had more than once put an end to the life of a sheep affected with scab or some other lingering disease. It was his habit to carry pistols, and in his pity for the helpless creatures, he would put an end to them by a kindly shot. This habit of Shelley's had so exasperated a rough specimen of the Welsh mountain sheep-farmer, named Robin Pant Evan, that he and his friends came down to Tanyrallt on that wild February night, and Evan fired a shot through the window, not meaning to murder anyone, but to give the inconvenient meddler a good fright. Shelley's pistol flashed in the pan. Robin entered the room, wrestled with him, knocked him down, and then escaped through the window. It was his rough face and form that Shelley afterwards saw standing near the beech-tree ; and when Shelley gazed out, all bewildered with the night alarm and the shaking, he thought he saw the devil. Robin gained his end, for Shelley and Harriet and her sister left the place next day never to return." When trying to describe the assault to Mrs. Williams, Shelley sketched on a screen a figure of the man by whom he had been attacked ; the screen has unhappily disappeared, but a reproduction from a copy of the sketch accompanies the article. Some years after the event, the same Robin Pant Evan confessed his part in this night adventure to certain members of the Greaves family who were living at Tanyrallt between 1847 and 1865. Miss Greaves, who now occupies Tanyrallt, has very courteously communicated to me some interesting particulars of the house. Peacock, who visited Tanyrallt in the summer of 1813, says that he "heard the matter much talked of. Persons who had examined the premises on the following morning had found that the grass of the lawn appeared to have been much trampled and rolled on, but there were no footmarks on the wet ground except between the beaten spot and the window ; and the impression of the ball on the wainscot showed that the pistol had been fired towards the window, and not from it."—*Fraser's Magazine*, June, 1858.

up all night, that I am afraid what he has written will alarm you very much. We intend to leave this place as soon as possible, as our lives are not safe as long as we remain. It is no common robber we dread, but a person who is actuated by revenge, and who threatens my life and my sister's as well. If you can send us the money, it will greatly add to our comfort.

Sir, I remain your sincere friend,

H. SHELLEY.

T. HOOKHAM, Esq.

169. TO JOHN WILLIAMS

(Tremadoc)

MY DEAR WILLIAMS,

I am surprised that the wretch who attacked me has not been heard of. Surely the inquiries have not been sufficiently general, or particular?

Mr. Nanney requests that you will order that some boards should be nailed against the broken window of Tanyrallt. We are in immediate want of money. Could you borrow twenty-five pounds in my name, to pay my little debts? I know your brother could lend me that sum. I think you could ask him on such an occasion as this.

My dear Williams, yours very truly,

P. B. SHELLEY.

170. TO JOHN WILLIAMS  
(Tremadoc)

[Postmark], BANGOR,  
[After March 5, 1813.]

MY DEAR WILLIAMS,

I have received a letter from Leeson,<sup>1</sup> which I enclose. His statement of this fact I know on reflection to be perfectly correct, with the exception of the latter part of his letter which is twisted in this way by his malice.

Did I not know the unalterable goodness of your heart, and had I not a confidence not to be shaken in your general rectitude, I should feel staggered at this deceit.

But I can trace all the springs of your conduct—all the windings of your mind are known to me.

<sup>1</sup> The following—

ROBERT LEESON<sup>(1)</sup> to P. B. SHELLEY.

MORFA LODGE, March 5, 1813.

Sir,—Having heard from several quarters that you lie under a mistake relative to the manner in which I was put in possession of a pamphlet signed "P. B. Shelley," I think it a pity that you should not be undeceived. I beg to tell you that it was not given to me by Mr. Ashstone, nor taken by him from John Williams' house,—*but* was handed to me by *John Williams* with a remark that it contained matter dangerous to the State, and that you had been in the practise of haranguing 500 people at a time when in Ireland. So much for your friend.

Sir, I remain yours,

ROB. LEESON.

(<sup>1</sup>) Robert Leeson, as we see from Harriet's letter of March 11, was supposed to have had a hand in the Tanyrallt outrage. This Prof. Dowden discredited in his "Life of Shelley," although he was, of course, without the facts that have recently come to light. He describes Leeson as "an eminently loyal and disagreeable Englishman, who had learnt in the early Tremadoc days from effusive Miss Hitchener of Shelley's authorship of a seditious pamphlet and the risk of a Government prosecution." "An envious, unfeeling sort of man," declares Mrs. Williams, "not very particular what he said of anyone," and who had charged Shelley to the face with his utterance of sedition. Mrs. Williams said that "when Mr. Shelley asked for his informant, Mr. Leeson pointed to my husband; but when the three met, Mr. Leeson made an apology, and confessed he had been told by Miss Hitchener."



In justice to the good, I, whilst I pity the bad I find, I am still obliged to disapprove.—I should not have been offended with you, had you told me the truth. You know me but little, whilst I know you very well.

Hence you suspect, and I confide. Let me have the comfort of knowing that when I vouch for your word, I vouch for what is true. As I told you when we parted, unless you are explicit and unreserved to me I am fighting in the dark. I am and shall continue to be your friend, but I should be your friend to little purpose unless I were also your confidant.

You will hear from us again soon in Dublin. I shall believe you in future, but never deceive me again.

My dear Williams,

Your true friend,

P. B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],

Mr. JOHN WILLIAMS,  
Ynnis Towyn,  
Tremadoc.

# 171. TO THOMAS HOOKHAM

(London)

BANGOR FERRY,

March 6, 1813.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

In the first stage of our journey towards Dublin we met with your letter. How shall I express to you what I felt of gratitude, surprise, and pleasure—not so much that the remittance rescued us from a situation of peculiar perplexity, but that one there was, who, by disinterested and unhesitating confidence, made amends to our feelings, wounded by the suspicion, coldness, and villainy of the world. If the discovery of truth be a pleasure of singular purity, how far surpassing is the discovery of virtue!

I am now recovered from an illness brought on by watching, fatigue, and alarm; and we are proceeding to

Dublin to dissipate the unpleasant impressions associated with the scene of our alarm.

We expect to be there on the 8th.<sup>1</sup> You shall then hear the detail of our distresses. The ball of the assassin's pistols (he fired at me twice) penetrated my nightgown and pierced the wainscot. He is yet undiscovered, though not unsuspected, as you will learn from my next.

Unless you knew us all more intimately, you cannot conceive with what fervour and sincerity my wife and sister join with me to you in gratitude and esteem.

Yours ever faithfully and affectionately,

PERCY B. SHELLEY.

P.S.—Though overwhelmed by our own distresses, we are by no means indifferent to those of liberty and virtue. From the tenor of your letter I augur that you have applied the £20 I sent to the benefit of the Hunts. I am anxious to hear further of the success of this experiment. My direction is—35 Great Cuffe Street, Dublin.<sup>2</sup> By your kindness and generosity we are perfectly relieved from all pecuniary difficulties. We only wanted a little breathing time, which the rapidity of our persecutions was unwilling to allow us. We shall readily repay the £20 when I hear from my correspondent in London, but when can I repay the friendship, the disinterestedness, and the zeal of your confidence?

T. HOOKHAM, Esq.

172. To JOHN WILLIAMS.

(Tremadoc)

50 GREAT CUFFE ST[REET], DUBLIN,

[? after March 9], 1813.

MY DEAR WILLIAMS,

I write to tell you that we have safely arrived in Dublin. Our passage was very tedious and stormy. It made us all

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<sup>1</sup> The Shelleys arrived at Dublin on March 9th.

<sup>2</sup> This was the address of Shelley's friend, John Lawless.

so ill that we are scarcely recovered. Well, we are arrived in Dublin, but so poor that, unless we find some friend, I know not what we shall do. I do not think that we can manage to live until the arrival of Mr. Caldecott's expected loan. We are in a foreign country where our name even is scarcely known, and where no one will give us credit for a farthing. You are surrounded by your friends, and though poor have some hope of refuge in necessity. You would oblige me by asking your brother to lend me £25. I know that if you wish to do this you can do it. Your brother is a man worth £5,000, and surely it would be an act of common friendship only to accommodate me with this sum until the arrival of the amount of Caldecott's loan.

I shall know by your compliance with this request whether the absence of friends is a cooler for friendship or not.

I remain, with the greatest zeal for your interests,

Your sincere friend,

[Addressed outside],

P. B. SHELLEY.

Mr. JOHN WILLIAMS,  
Tremadoc,  
Carnarvon.

### 173. TO THOMAS HOOKHAM

(London)

[CUFFE STREET, ST. STEPHEN'S GREEN, DUBLIN,

March, 1813.]

MY DEAR SIR,

Harriet related to you the mysterious events which caused our departure from Tanyrallt.<sup>1</sup> I was at that time

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<sup>1</sup> HARRIET SHELLEY TO THOMAS HOOKHAM

35 CUFFE STREET, STEPHEN'S GREEN, DUBLIN,

March 11 [1813].

MY DEAR SIR,

We arrived here last Tuesday [March 9], after a most tedious passage of forty hours, during the whole of which time we were dreadfully ill. I am afraid no diet will prevent us from the common lot of suffering when obliged to take a sea voyage.

so nervous and unsettled as to be wholly incapable of the task. Do not, however, conceive that for one moment I lose the grateful recollection of your kindness and attention.

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Mr. S. promised you a recital of the horrible events that caused us to leave Wales. I have undertaken the task, as I wish to spare him, in the present nervous state of his health, everything that can recall to his mind the horrors of that night, which I will relate.

On Friday night, the 26th of February, we retired to bed between ten and eleven o'clock. We had been in bed about half-an-hour, when Mr. S. heard a noise proceeding from one of the parlours. He immediately went downstairs with two pistols, which he had loaded that night, expecting to have occasion for them. He went into the billiard room, where he heard footsteps retreating; he followed into another little room, which was called an office. He there saw a man in the act of quitting the room through a glass window which opens into the shrubbery. The man fired at Mr. S., which he avoided. Bysshe then fired, but it flashed in the pan. The man then knocked Bysshe down, and they struggled on the ground. Bysshe then fired his second pistol, which he thought wounded him in the shoulder, as he uttered a shriek and got up, when he said these words: "By God, I will be revenged! I will murder his wife; I will ravish your sister! By God. I will be revenged!" He then fled—as we hoped for the night. Our servants were not gone to bed, but were just going, when this horrible affair happened. This was about eleven o'clock. We all assembled in the parlour, where we remained for two hours. Mr. S. then advised us to retire, thinking it impossible he would make a second attack. We left Bysshe and the manservant, who had only arrived that day, and who knew nothing of the house, to sit up. I had been in bed three hours when I heard a pistol go off. I immediately ran downstairs, when I perceived that Bysshe's flannel gown had been shot through, and the window-curtain. Bysshe had sent Daniel to see what hour it was, when he heard a noise at the window. He went there, and a man thrust his arm through the glass and fired at him. Thank Heaven! the ball went through his gown and he remained unhurt, Mr. S. happened to stand sideways; had he stood fronting, the ball must have killed him. Bysshe fired his pistol, but it would not go off; he then aimed a blow at him with an old sword which we found in the house. The assassin attempted to get the sword from him, and just as he was pulling it away Dan rushed into the room, when he made his escape.

This was at four in the morning. It had been a most dreadful night; the wind was as loud as thunder, and the rain descended in torrents. Nothing has been heard of him; and we have every reason to believe it was no stranger, as there is a man of the name of Leeson, who the next morning that it happened went and told the shopkeepers of Tremadoc that it was a tale of Mr. Shelley's



I send you my poem.<sup>1</sup> To your remarks on its defects I shall listen and derive improvement. No duty of a friend is more imperious than an utter sincerity and unreservedness [in] criticisms, and none of which a candid mind can be the object with more inward complacency and satisfaction. At the same time, in spite of its various

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to impose upon them, that he might leave the country without paying his bills. This they believed, and none of them attempted to do anything towards his discovery.

We left Tanyrallt on Saturday, and stayed till everything was ready for our leaving the place, at the Solicitor-General of the county's house, who lived seven miles from us. This Mr. Leeson has been heard to say that he was determined to drive us out of the country. He once happened to get hold of a little pamphlet which Mr. S. had printed in Dublin; this he sent up to Government.<sup>(1)</sup> In fact, he was for ever saying something against us, and that because we were determined not to admit him to our house, because we had heard of his character; and from many acts of his we found that he was malignant and cruel to the greatest degree.

The pleasure that we experienced at reading your letter you may conceive at the same time when every one seemed to be plotting against us.<sup>(2)</sup>

Pardon me if I wound your feelings by dwelling on this subject. Your conduct has made a deep impression on our minds, which no length of time can erase. Would that all mankind were like thee.

<sup>(3)</sup> Mr. Shelley and my sister unite with me in kind regards; whilst I remain,

Yours truly,

H. SHELLEY.

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(1) See Shelley's letter to Williams and footnote, p. 388.

(2) This sentence and the signature is from Hogg's transcript.

(3) The paper is here clipped or torn, and the following words remain: "When thou whom we had . . . the horrible suspicion . . . from the task when called upon in a moment like that." Prof. Dowden's note. Hogg prints this sentence as "when those who a few weeks back, had been offering their services, shrunk from the task, when called upon in a moment like that." Hogg states that Harriet wrote to him from Tanyrallt an account of the catastrophe a day or two after it happened. To the best of his recollection, it was precisely similar word for word, indeed, to her letter to Hookham of March 11.

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<sup>1</sup> "Queen Mab," which was printed without either the motto from Shakespeare or a preface.

errors, I am determined to give it to the world<sup>1</sup>. . . . If you do not dread the arm of the law, or any exasperation of public opinion against yourself, I wish that it should be printed and published immediately.

The notes are preparing, and shall be forwarded, before the completion of the printing of the poem. I have many other poems which shall also be sent. The notes will be long, philosophical, and anti-Christian. This will be unnoticed in a note.

Do not let the title-page be printed before the body of the poems. I have a motto to introduce from Shakespeare, and a preface.

I shall expect no success. Let only 250 copies be printed—a small neat quarto, on fine paper, and so as to catch the aristocrats. They will not read it, but their sons and daughters may.

All join in best feelings towards you.

Your faithful friend,

[P. B. SHELLEY.]

#### 174. TO JOHN WILLIAMS

35 CUFF STREET, STEPHEN'S GREEN, DUBLIN,

March 21, 1813.

MY DEAR WILLIAMS,

I have received your letter. Nothing less entered my mind than the accusing, or even in the slightest degree suspecting, you of treachery. The contents of my letter from Bangor is the amount of my charge against you. You, like all other men, are to a certain degree defective and inconsistent. True friendship bears to hear, and bears to tell, of faults.

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<sup>1</sup> Here, for the sake of Shelley's signature on the other side, an autograph hunter snipped out a piece of the letter: the words remain, "I shall know at what a loss . . . all my future literary worth . . . cease the memory of its deficiencies." Professor Dowden's note,

Bedwell has written to tell me that all my bills are returned protested. I know not what to do. If Caldicott will advance £400, I must commission you to discharge the demands at Tremadoc against me: if he will not, I must be content that Leeson's lies should gain credit, and never return again.

Have you heard again from the mortgagees? Does Bedwell press on you for his debt? How go on your concerns?—Mine are in a bad state. I have no friends in Ireland who are not poorer than myself.

Enclosed is a——, which Ellen took as the price of a ——.<sup>1</sup>

There is a box of books directed to me at Carnarvon, which I am extremely anxious to receive. Could you see to forward it, and pay the duty—2*d.* per lb.? The other box I wish to be sent to the care of Mrs. Nanney.

Harriet and Eliza desire to be kindly remembered.

Your sincere friend,

P. B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],

JOHN WILLIAMS, Esq.,  
Tremadoc, Carnarvonshire,  
North Wales.

### 175. To JOHN WILLIAMS

35 GT. CUFFE STREET,

[STEPHEN'S GREEN, DUBLIN],

March 30, 1813.

MY DEAR WILLIAMS,

I feel much obliged by your friendly exertion to procure the small sum I stand in need of, I did not desire the request as a test of your goodness, and if I said so, it was the dictate rather of our extreme distress than any doubt I entertained of you. I have received a very dictatorial and unpleasant letter from Mr. Bedwell, which I have answered in an unbending spirit. He is a friendly and

---

<sup>1</sup> [Letter torn.]

well-meaning man, but I must not be treated like a school-boy. I told him in my letter that I pay friendship with friendship and money with money. The letter which you have sent me of Miss H[itchener]'s is the most artful production I ever read. It is suited to what she believes to (be) your character, and my supposed ignorance of law. But in truth she is a woman of desperate views and dreadful passions, but of cool and undeviating revenge. Her affected contempt of this feeling puts me in mind of the man who said "Damn my bones and blood if I ever swear, damn me if I do." Her artifice in one part of the letter is too palpable for success. She can assume the character of Christian or Infidel as it suits her purpose. I laughed heartily at her day of retributions, and at her idea of bringing you, me, and herself before a being whom a few months ago she was the first to deny. If you write to her you may tell her (but not from me) that her threat of confiscation and death savour so little of vengeance or intimidation that my heart is quite subdued by the bewitching benevolence of her intentions, but that I fear the government (tho' perhaps the weakest in the world) is not so miserably silly or wicked as to help the wiles of a soured and disappointed woman—with respect to her friendliness to Harriet in her answer to yours, of that you are the best judge and to that you will answer "with the fear of the Lord before your eyes."

Altho', my dear Williams, I am a very hardened sinner and without doubt shall be damned to all eternity, yet in this life I am ready to do anything for my country and my friends that will serve them, and among the rest for you,

Whose affectionate friend I continue to be,

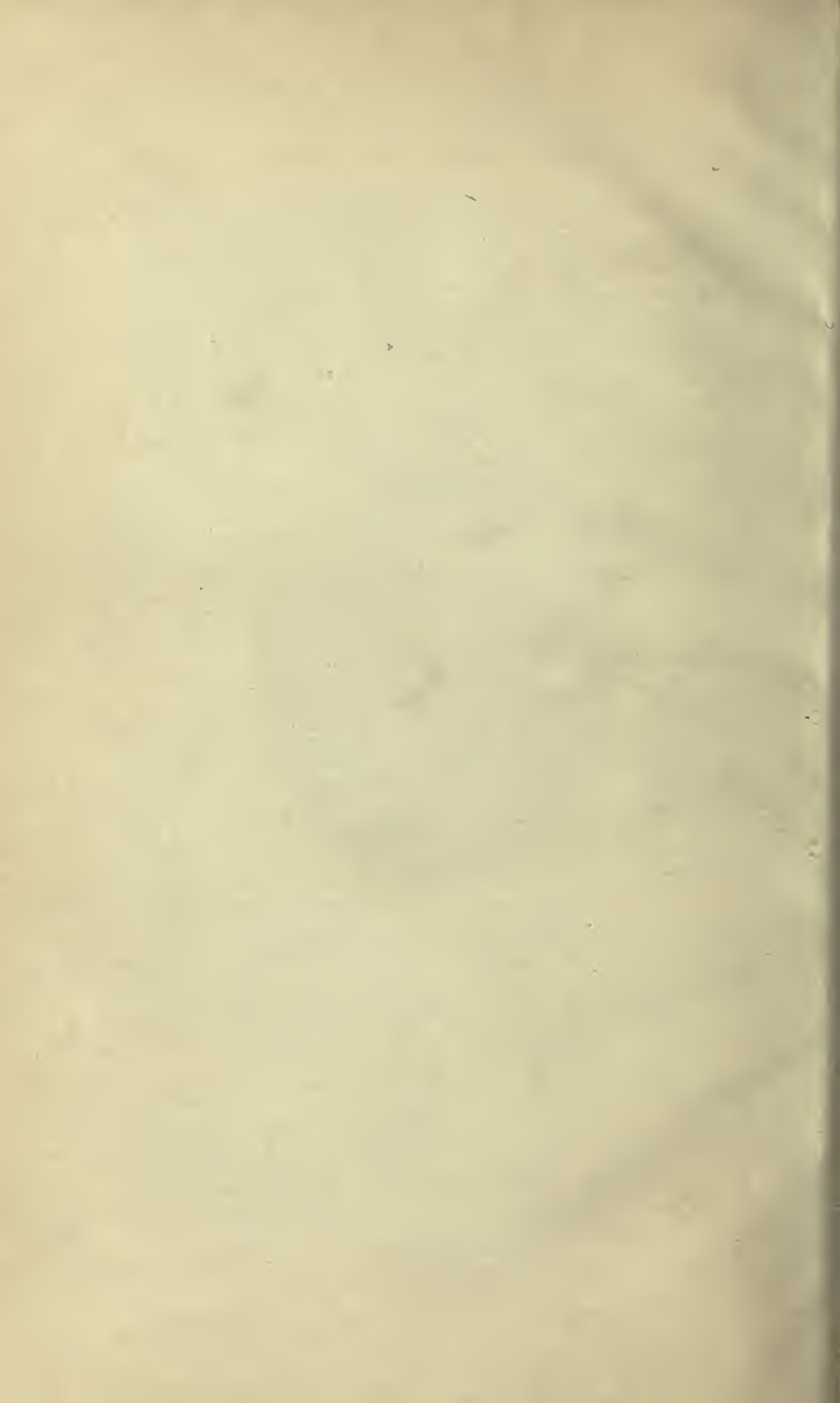
PERCY B. SHELLEY.

Harriet and Eliza unite in kind remembrance. Perhaps it were as well to send this letter to Miss Hitchener. I am above all secrecy, and her threats are surely calculated rather to amuse than alarm any but little boys and girls.





*From a photograph after a miniature,  
by kind permission of Mr. W. M. Rossetti*  
CAPTAIN JOHN PILFOLD, R.N.



(Written by Harriet Shelley)

Do not send this letter to Miss H. and do not answer hers.<sup>1</sup>

176. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG

CORK HOTEL, DUBLIN,

March 31, 1813.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

We have just arrived in Dublin<sup>2</sup>—had you remained here

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<sup>1</sup> The following letter throws an interesting sidelight on the foregoing correspondence—

FROM CAPTAIN PILFOLD TO JOHN WILLIAMS

NELSON HALL, LINDFIELD, SUSSEX,

Jany. 6, 1814.

SIR,

There is an old proverb "Better late than never," I therefore take this opportunity to thank you for your letter of the 21 of Feby., 1813, in which you completely refuted Miss Hitchener's charge against Miss Westbrook and Mrs. Shelley of having offered you the least possible insult. Mr. Shelley is my nephew, and I need not tell you *how* difficult I found it, to reconcile Miss Hitchener's story with their known moral and virtuous good characters. My only having heard this story has given such offence that I have never heard from them since, Wishing you all possible health and happiness to enjoy their delightful company,

I am yours, etc.,

JOHN PILFOLD.

P.S. I was also pleased to find from your letter that Mr. Shelley had so honourably and on the first application discharged his debt to your brother, whom Miss H[itchener] did not describe as a poor man, but one to whom such a loss would be serious. Your expressions of gratitude towards Mr. and Mrs. Shelley for their great kindness towards you, does credit to you as a man of feeling.

<sup>2</sup> Hogg's promised visit to Tanyrallt had been abandoned owing to the assault on Shelley at that place, and his flight to Ireland. As a compensation, Hogg was invited to Dublin, from whence several letters (since lost) were addressed to him, pressing him to come. When Hogg arrived at 35 Cuffe Street, Dublin, he was informed that Shelley, Harriet, Miss Westbrook, and the servant, probably Daniel Healey, had gone off to Killarney. After spending a week or ten days in Dublin, Hogg, vexed at this fruitless journey, returned in the Post Office Packet for Holyhead. (Hogg's "Shelley," Vol. II, p. 217 *et seqq.*) According to Hogg, Shelley had occupied a cottage on the lake at Killarney. This place made a deep and lasting impression on the poet, for in a letter to Peacock from Milan on April 20, 1818, Shelley says that "Lake [Como] exceeds anything I ever beheld in beauty, with the exception of the Arbutus Islands of Killarney."

but one day, you would have seen us. We travelled night and day, from the receipt of your note. My Harriet insists on accompanying me. Her spirits, and the hope of seeing you here, supported her through two days and nights of hard travelling : 240 English miles.

You falsely supposed that her note was in answer to yours. We did not receive yours until Monday noon. On Monday evening we began travelling on Irish roads with Irish horses and chaise. We reached Cork at one the next day, took the mail, and to-day, Wednesday, at three o'clock arrived. We shall soon be with you in London ; Eliza and our servant remain in Killarney.<sup>1</sup>

You ought not to accuse me of reserve towards you. It is the inconceivable blindness and matter of fact stupidity of Lawless that deserve your reprehension ; but had you staid one day longer, you would have heard the words of sincerity and friendship from my own lips. As soon as I shall consider the fatigue as overcome, I shall come to London. I must by some means raise money for the journey here, but I am not one to stick at difficulties.

Do not write to us here. We shall be on our way before your letter could arrive.

Harriet unites in kind remembrances.

Your very sincere friend,

PERCY B. S.

Harriet will write to-morrow.

### 177. TO JOHN WILLIAMS

[No date.]

DEAR SIR,

Will you have the goodness to call upon Mr. Wakeman at Carnarvon, to receive the sum of £2 0s. 0d. which he has to pay for a box of ours, but the box has been sent to

<sup>1</sup> " At the end of March, 1813, Shelley and Harriet came from Killarney in great haste, leaving Miss Westbrook there, with a large library, but without money, that there might be no temptations to discontinue her studies."—Hogg's " Shelley," Vol. II, p. 389.



Chester, therefore he is to pay you the money. I find the carrier has a little Bill against us. Will you pay him and send the box which he returns to London to Mr. Westbrook's, 23 Chapel Street. If it came to us at Grosvenor Square the Custom house London men would take it, as it contains gin.

To Mr. JOHN WILLIAMS,  
Tremadoc,  
Carnarvonshire.

178. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG

DUBLIN,

April 3, [? 1], 1813.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I wrote yesterday before I had seen Lawless, under the one and only impression of disappointment at not meeting you here. That, however, shall speedily be remedied. I have raised a small sum of money, and to-morrow evening [April 2] we embark for Holyhead.

I have been very much pleased at what Lawless has said of you. The first ten words he spoke entirely dissipated all the ill-humour I had cherished against him. He had done what I could not conceive any one, who dined with you, could have neglected. He had been open with you.

Of course you will not write to us here. Above all do not send, or dream of procuring for us any money; we will do those matters well. The property of friends at least is in common. On Monday evening we shall be in London.

I write from Lawless's. I am very much pleased and flattered by his account of you.

Harriet is quite well. She writes to-day.

My dear friend, all happiness attend you.

Yours affectionately,

PERCY B. SHELLEY.

## VIII.—LAST DAYS WITH HARRIET

April 5, 1813—April 14, 1814

SHELLEY'S Return to London—Negotiations with his Father—The Duke of Norfolk—The birth of his eldest child, Ianthe—John Frank Newton—Revisits the Lakes—At Edinburgh—"The Refutation of Deism"—At Bracknell—Mrs. Boinville and her Daughter—Italian Studies.

### 179. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG

[23 CHAPEL STREET, LONDON,  
April 5, 1813.]

[No date.]

MY DEAR FRIEND,<sup>1</sup>

We have just arrived. We are now at 23 Chapel Street, but will see you, or write to-morrow morning.

Yours affectionately,

P. B. S.

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<sup>1</sup> There was some anxiety on the part of Mr. Lawless at the Shelleys' sudden departure from Dublin, and not hearing from him for a month he at length wrote to Hogg for tidings of his friend. The following correspondence is printed by Hogg in his "Life of Shelley," Vol. II, p. 259—

TO THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG

35 GREAT CUFFE STREET, DUBLIN,  
May 3, 1813.

DEAR SIR,

I take the liberty of troubling you with these few lines to be informed by you how our good friends the Shelleys are, from whom I have heard but once since they left this country. I did flatter myself with a letter from my friend long before this, and now begin to apprehend some serious cause for his not writing. I hope no such cause has interposed, and if not, you will much oblige me by telling him how anxious both Mrs. Lawless and I are to hear from him and Mrs. Shelley. I suppose Miss Westbrook has long since arrived with you.

I remain,

Your very humble servant,

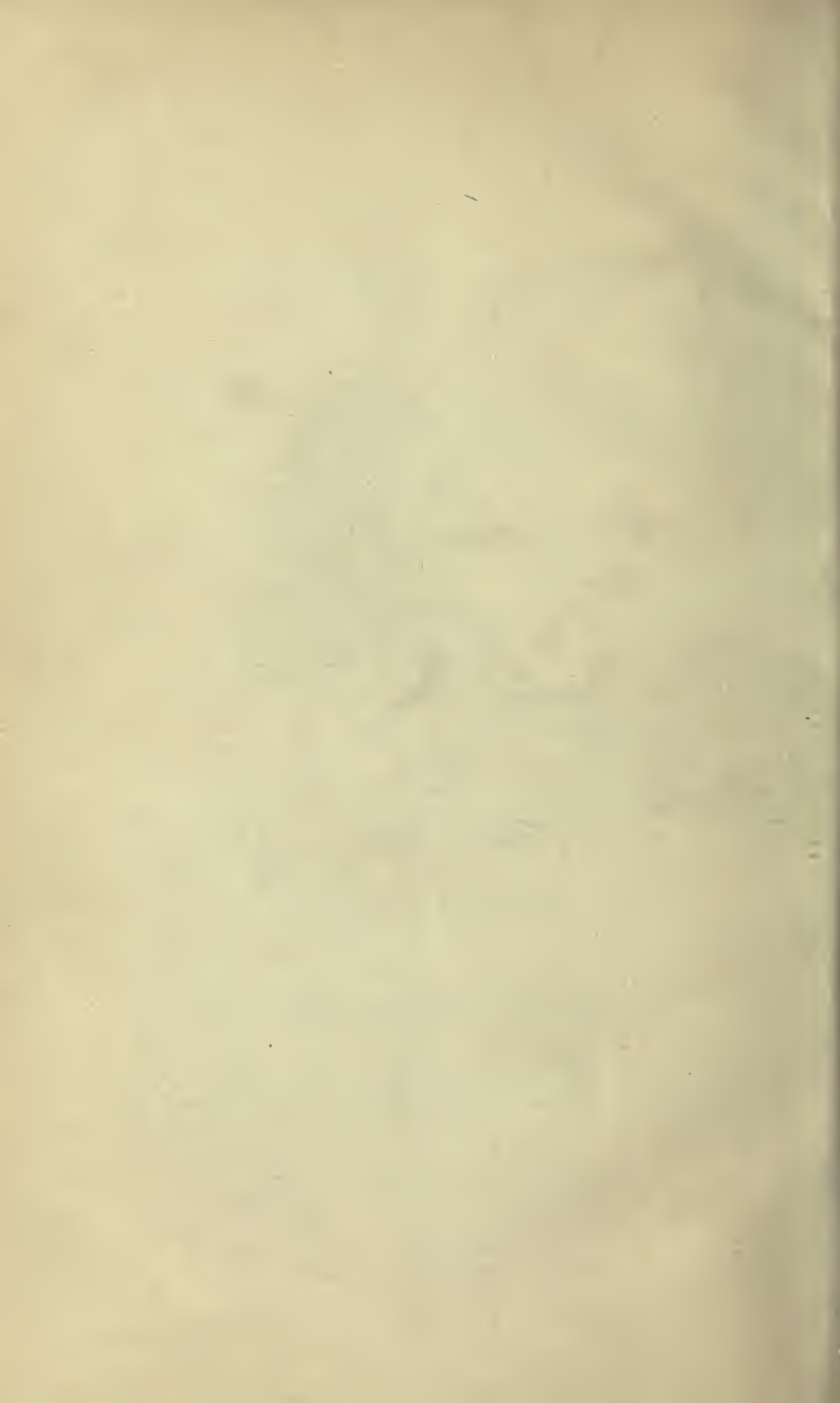
JOHN LAWLESS.



*After a sketch by Reginald Easton in Mrs. Julian Marshall's "Life of M. W. Shelley," by permission of Messrs. Macmillan & Co., Ltd.*

*J. Jeff. Hogg, Univ. Coll.  
Oxon.*

as he sat playing chess at Boscombe





## 180. TO TIMOTHY SHELLEY

COOKE'S HOTEL,

ALBEMARLE STREET, [LONDON],<sup>1</sup>

May 4, 1813.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I once more presume to address you to state to you my sincere desire of being considered worthy of a restoration to the intercourse with yourself and my family which I have forfeited by my follies. Some time since I stated my feelings on this subject in a letter to the Duke of

*(First Indorsement)*

TO HARRIET SHELLEY

SUNDAY MORNING.

DEAREST HARRIET,

I am very sorry that Bysshe is unwell. It is hard that his heart should be so good, and his head so bad : I wish you had as much influence over the latter as over the former. Mr. Lawless has had the goodness to send me the paper, on which I write. Bysshe will answer him. I met Mr. and Mrs. Newton, as I returned last night ; they ordered me to tell you that they would take tea with you this evening. Adieu !

Yours truly,

T. J. H[OGG.]

*(Second Indorsement)*

TO THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG

Bysshe is better now, and wishes for your company this evening, at eight o'clock, to meet the Newtons.

HARRIET.

<sup>1</sup> Hogg says (Vol. II, 389) that the Shelleys "remained a few days at a hotel in Dover Street, and then Harriet took lodgings in Half-Moon Street, accounting the situation fashionable; they stayed there several months, and then went to Pimlico to be near the B[oinville]s, which was esteemed very desirable; and there I think Ianthe was born. In August following Shelley came of age. There was a little projecting window in Half-Moon Street, in which Shelley might be seen from the street all day long, book in hand, with lively gestures and bright eyes; so that Mrs. N[ewton] said, he wanted only a pan of clear water and a fresh turf to look like some young lady's lark, hanging outside for air and song." I have not seen any letters of Shelley addressed from Half-Moon Street, or Pimlico; it seems possible that after he left the hotel he may have continued to use it as an address for letters.

Norfolk. I was agreeably surprised by a visit from him the other day, and much regretted that illness prevented me from keeping my appointment with him on the succeeding morning. If, however, I could convince you of the change that has taken place in some of the most unfavourable traits of my character, and of my willingness to make any concessions that may be judged best for the interest of my family, I flatter myself that there would be little further need of his Grace's interference. I hope the time is approaching when we shall consider each other as father and son with more confidence than ever, and that I shall no longer be a cause of disunion to the happiness of my family. I was happy to hear from John Grove, who dined with us yesterday, that you continue in good health. My wife unites with me in respectful regards.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> In the following letter to Catherine Nugent, Harriet alludes to Shelley's negotiations with his father for a reconciliation, and it would appear from Harriet's next letter (p. 406) that Shelley's mother and sisters wished him and Harriet to visit Field Place. Unhappily the terms of peace, laid down by his father, made this reconciliation impossible.

COOKE'S HOTEL, ALBEMARLE STREET, LONDON,  
May 21 [1813].

MY DEAR MRS. NUGENT,

I find the longer a time elapses before I make my apology for not having written before, the more awkward I feel at the idea of addressing you. My greatest consolation, however, is derived from this—that you will not attribute my silence to neglect, but to the hurry and bustle of a city. I am ashamed to say I have written to no one since I arrived here, if that can extenuate my crime. You would pardon me if you knew in what a state of confusion I live. To give a description of it is impossible. Even now there are two waiters in the room to lay our cloth for dinner, and you well know the movements of a waiter are far from silent. I have been in London a long time, though it seems to me that I have only been here a few days. Mr. Shelley's family are very eager to be reconciled to him, and I should not in the least wonder if my next letter was not sent from his Paternal roof, as we expect to be there in a week or two. His father has been in town, when, at the earnest solicitation of his cousin, Bysshe wrote to him. He has not yet answered the letter; but we expect it daily. Their conduct is most surprising, after treating us like dogs they wish for our Society. I hope it will turn out well, tho' I hardly dare suppose so. My sister has joined me some time. You may suppose I was not a little pleased to see her

181. TO CHARLES, DUKE OF NORFOLK  
(Norfolk House)

COOKE'S HOTEL, ALBEMARLE STREET, [LONDON],  
FRIDAY MORNING, [May 28, 1813].

MY LORD DUKE,

I sincerely regret that any of your valuable time should have been occupied in the vain and impossible task of reconciling myself and my father. Allow me, however, to express my warmest gratitude for the interest you have so kindly taken in my concerns, which have thus unexpectedly terminated in disunion and disappointment.

I was prepared to make my father every reasonable concession, but I am not so degraded and miserable a slave as publicly to disavow an opinion which I believe to be true. Every man of common sense must plainly see that a sudden renunciation of sentiments seriously taken up is as unfortunate a test of intellectual uprightness as can possibly be devised. I take the liberty of enclosing my

again. We have not got our boxes yet that were sent from Cork to Bristol, and when we shall see them again is uncertain. Mr. Ryan dines with us to-day. I give him meat, but we have all taken to the vegetable regimen again, which I shall not leave off, for I find myself so much better for it, that it would be very great injustice to eat flesh again. Have you seen Mr. Lawless? He wrote to us from Prison a few weeks ago, but I do not suppose he was there, because Ryan knew nothing about it, and he is only just arrived from there. This is franked by La Touche, for I feel it is not worth postage. I hope to hear from you soon, tho' I feel I do not deserve it; but you are too kind to take any advantage over me. Mr. Shelley continues perfectly well, and his Poem of "Queen Mab" is begun [apparently, to be printed], tho' it must not be published under pain of death, because it is too much against every existing establishment. It is to be privately distributed to his friends, and some copies sent over to America. Do you [qy. know] any one that would wish for so dangerous a gift? If you do, tell me of them, and they shall not be forgotten. Adieu! All unite in kind regards to you, and I remain your sincerely attached friend,

H. SHELLEY.

Direct to this hotel.

[Addressed outside],

Mrs. NUGENT,  
No. 101 Grafton Street,  
St. Stephen's Green, Dublin.

father's letter<sup>1</sup> for your Grace's inspection. I repeat what I have said from the commencement of this negociation, in which private communications from my father first induced me to engage, that I am willing to concede anything that is reasonable, anything that does not involve a compromise of that self-esteem without which life would be a burthen and a disgrace.

Permit me to repeat the unalterable recollection I cherish of your kindness, and to remain,

My Lord Duke,

Your very faithful obt. Servt.,

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

## 182. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG

(London)

COOKE'S HOTEL [LONDON],

WEDNESDAY MORN. (June [3], 1813).

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

Harriet writes in this. I only desire that I were always as anxious to confer on you all possible happiness, as she is.

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<sup>1</sup> TIMOTHY SHELLEY TO P. B. SHELLEY

MILLER'S HOTEL [LONDON],

26 May, 1813.

MY DEAR BOY,

I am sorry to find by the contents of your letter of yesterday that I was mistaken in the conclusion I drew from your former letter, in which you assured me a change had taken place in some of the most unfavourable Traits in your Character, as what regards your avow'd opinions are in my Judgment the most material parts of Character requiring amendment; and as you now avow there is no change effected in them, I must decline all further Communication, or any Personal Interview, until that shall be Effected, and I desire you will consider this as my final answer to anything you may have to offer.

If that Conclusion had not operated on my mind to give this answer, I desire you also to understand that I should not have received any Communication but through His Grace the Duke of Norfolk, as I know his exalted mind will protect me at the moment and with the World.

I beg to return all usual remembrance.

I am, Yr. Affecte. Father,

T. SHELLEY



She tells you, that she invites you this evening. It will be better than our lonesome and melancholy interviews.

Your very affectionate,

P. B. SHELLEY.

I am very sure that Harriet will be as kind as ever. I could see, when I spoke to her (if my eyes were not blinded by love), that it was an error, not of the feelings, but of reason. I entreat you to come this evening. I send this by the servant, that there may be no delay.

183. TO THOMAS CHARLES MEDWIN  
(Horsham)

COOKE'S HOTEL, ALBEMARLE STREET, [LONDON,  
Postmark], 16 June, 1813.

MY DEAR SIR,

It is some time since I have addressed you, but as our interests are interwoven in a certain degree by a community of disappointment, I shall do so now without ceremony.

I was desirous of seeing you on the subject of the approaching expiration of my minority, but hourly expecting Mrs. Shelley's confinement, I am not able to leave her for the present.

I wish to know whether at that epoch, you would object to see me through the difficulties with which I am surrounded.

You may depend on my grateful remembrance of what you have already done for me, and suffered on my account, whether you consent or refuse to add to the list of my obligations to you. The late negotiations between myself and my father have been abruptly broken off by the latter. This I do not regret, as his caprice and intolerance would not have suffered the wound to heal.

I know that I am heir to large property. How are the papers to be seen? Have you the least doubt but that I

am the safe heir to a large landed property? Have you any certain knowledge on the subject?

If you are coming to town soon, I should be most happy to see you; or, after Mrs. Shelley's confinement, I will visit you at Horsham.

Mrs. S. unites in her remembrances to all your family.

Yours very sincerely,

P. B. SHELLEY.

184. TO THOMAS CHARLES MEDWIN

(Horsham)

COOKE'S HOTEL, DOVER STREET [LONDON],

June 21, 1813.<sup>1</sup>

MY DEAR SIR,

Mrs. Shelley's confinement may take place in one day,

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<sup>1</sup> On the day after Shelley wrote this letter, Harriet addressed the following to Catherine Nugent—

COOKE'S HOTEL, DOVER STREET, PICCADILLY,

June 22nd, [1813].

MY DEAR MRS. NUGENT,

The kind expressions contained in your last letter gave me sincere pleasure, feeling as I did that I had not acted according to my ideas of right and wrong in delaying to write to you. I am sorry to hear that poor Lawless is confined [in prison]. If he had taken his friends' advice all his debts would have been settled long ago; but pride, that bane of all human happiness, unfortunately stepped in and marred all his good prospects. Mr. Ryan is still in London; but I expect to hear daily of his leaving us. Have you had any good weather, for ours is miserable? Our summer has not yet commenced. The fruit is still sour for want of sun, and will continue so from the present appearance of the weather. Our Irish servant [Daniel Healey] is going to leave us. Poor fellow, he pines after his dear Ireland, and is at the same time very ill. He was never of any use to us; but so great was his attachment that we could not bear to send him away. Mr. Shelley has broken off the negotiation, and will have no more to say to his son, because that son will not write to the people of Oxford, and declare his return to Christianity. Did you ever hear of such an old dotard? It seems that so long as he lives, Bysshe must never hope to see or hear anything of his family. This is certainly an unpleasant circumstance, particularly as his mother wishes to see him, and has a great affection for him. What think you of Bonaparte? To most of the Irish he is a great

or not until six weeks. In this state of uncertainty, I would unwillingly leave town even for a few hours. I therefore should be happy to see you as soon as you could make a journey to town convenient. Depend upon it, that no artifice of my father's shall seduce me to take a life interest in the estate. I feel with sufficient force, that I should not by such conduct be guilty alone of injustice to myself, but to those who have assisted me by kind offices and advice during my adversity.

Mrs. S. unites with me in best wishes to you and yours.

My dear Sir,

Your very obliged

PERCY B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],  
T. C. MEDWIN, Esq.,  
Horsham,  
Sussex.

185. TO THOMAS CHARLES MEDWIN  
(Horsham)

COOKE'S HOTEL, DOVER STREET, [LONDON],  
June 28, 1813.

MY DEAR SIR,

I am happy to inform you that Mrs. Shelley has been

favourite. I only wish we had peace. So long a war as this has been is indeed too dreadful to continue much longer. How is your health? I am afraid you sit too close to your business [paper torn, word lost] to enjoy good health; yet, as the winter is gone, surely you need not make any more warm tippets! That will be time enough next November. We have not seen much of Godwin, for his wife is so dreadfully disagreeable that I could not bear the idea of seeing her. Mr. S. has done that away, tho', by telling G. that I could not bear the society of his darling wife. Poor man, we are not the only people who find her troublesome. Mr. S. joins me and Eliza in kind regards to you, and believe me yours with esteem,

H. S.

[Addressed outside],  
Mrs. NUGENT,  
No. 101 Grafton Street,  
St. Stephen's Green, Dublin.

safely delivered of a little girl,<sup>1</sup> and is now rapidly recovering.

I would not leave her in her present state, and therefore still consider your proposal of fixing the interview in London as most eligible.

I need not tell you that the sooner that I have the pleasure of seeing you, the sooner my mind, and that of my wife, will be relieved from a most unpleasant feeling of embarrassment and uncertainty. You may entirely confide in my secrecy and prudence.

I desire my very best remembrances to all yours, and remain,

My dear Sir,

Very faithfully yours,

[Addressed outside],

P. B. SHELLEY.

T. C. MEDWIN, Esq.,  
Horsham,  
Sussex.

186. TO THOMAS CHARLES MEDWIN

(Horsham)

COOKE'S HOTEL, DOVER STREET [LONDON],

July 6, 1813.

MY DEAR SIR,

I shall be most happy to see you at six o'clock, to dinner, to-morrow. I think this plan is the best. Mrs. Shelley unites with me in best remembrances to all your family.

I remain,

Yours very faithfully,

[Addressed outside],

P. B. SHELLEY.

T. C. MEDWIN, Esq.,  
Horsham, Sussex.

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<sup>1</sup> Shelley's eldest child, born shortly before the date of this letter, was named Ianthe Elizabeth. Ianthe is the name of the lady in "Queen Mab," which also saw the light this year; the name of Elizabeth, was that of Shelley's favourite sister, and also of Harriet's sister. Professor Dowden prints some verses by Shelley, "To Ianthe, September, 1813" ("Life of Shelley," Vol. II, p. 376). Ianthe Shelley became Mrs. Esdaile, and died in June, 1876; her descendants are Shelley's only living representatives.



## 187. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG

COOKE'S HOTEL, [LONDON],

FRIDAY [July 8, 1813].

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Medwin, the attorney of Horsham, stayed so late on the night of my promised visit, that I could not come. Last night your short note arrived, also beyond its hour, and the N[ewton]s<sup>1</sup> had already taken me with them. This night the N[ewton]s have a party at Vauxhall; if you will call here at *nine* o'clock we will go together.

What can your notes mean; how suspicious you have become. I will not insert *one but*. Leonora<sup>2</sup> has arrived. Medwin dines with me. Harriet is quite well, and her infant better.

Your affectionate friend,

P. B. SHELLEY.

## 188. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG

HIGH ELMS, BRACKNELL,

July 27, 1813.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I was disappointed at being unable to call on you on Sunday morning [July 25]. My presence was required at home, but as I shall be in town in a few days, I expect

---

<sup>1</sup> Shelley made the acquaintance of John Frank Newton, (author of "The Return to Nature, or a Defence of the Vegetable Regimen," 1811) through the Godwins, when he visited London in October and November, 1812. Shelley made use of Newton's book in his vegetarian note to "Queen Mab," which was afterwards reprinted in 1813, as a separate pamphlet. At the Newtons' house in Chester Street, Shelley was admitted to a circle of very charming people, among whom were Mrs. Boinville (sister to Mrs. Newton), and her daughter Cornelia, who afterwards became Mrs. Turner. When the Shelleys took a furnished house at Bracknell and Mrs. Boinville went to live in the same village, the intimacy of the two families continued.

<sup>2</sup> Does this relate to "Leonora," the novel so called, jointly produced by Shelley and Hogg while at Oxford? (See p. 18.)

still to have the pleasure of seeing you before your journey to the North.

Tell me when you depart from London. I am anxious to see you, or if I cannot, to write to you at greater length. It is far more probable that we shall remain here until the Spring.

I know you will be happy even to receive these few lines, and therefore I do not wait until to-morrow, when I should write a longer letter.

Your very affectionate Friend,

PERCY B. SHELLEY.

HARRIET SHELLEY TO CATHERINE NUGENT

HIGH ELMS HOUSE, BRACKNELL, BERKSHIRE,

August 8 [1813].

MY DEAR MRS. NUGENT,

I confess I have been guilty of seeming unkindness in not writing before ; but such a multiplicity of business has occupied me ever since the receipt of your last that I have not had a moment to spare, even to you, my good friend. The babe is quite well, and very much grown. She is indebted to you for many kind enquiries, which one day she will thank you for in person. Mr. S. is of age, but no longer heir to the immense property of his sires. They are trying to take it away, and will I am afraid succeed, as it appears there is a flaw in the drawing up of the settlement, by which they can deprive him of everything. This is a beautiful idea, and well worthy the noble men who have formed it, among whom I suspect a certain *great personage*. They have put it into Chancery, though I fancy it can and will be kept an entire secret. You may suppose that we will do everything to prevent this shameful abuse of property, as we are convinced that more good would be effected if we have it, than if they regain it. We are now in a house 30 miles from London, merely for convenience. How long we remain is uncertain, as I fear our necessities will oblige us to remove to a greater distance. Our friends the Newtons are trying to do everything in their power to serve us ; but our doom is decided. You who know us may well judge of our feelings. To have all our plans set aside in this manner is a miserable thing. Not that I regret the loss, but for the sake of those I intended to benefit. Mr. S. unites with me and Eliza in kind regards, whilst believe me your firmly attached friend,

H. S.

HARRIET SHELLEY TO CATHERINE NUGENT

HIGH ELMS HOUSE, BRACKNELL, BERKS,

Sep. 10 [1813].

MY DEAR MRS. NUGENT,

I hasten to answer your last letter and to give you the same hopes which we entertain about the subject of my last. Mr. Shelley has seen his father and told him of what he heard, which he denied, and received him very kindly. Since then his lawyer has employed a council (*sic*). His opinion is at present tending (*sic*). I have no doubt now, tho' I had at first, that they can take it away. I have a very bad opinion of all lawyers in general, and I rather think Mr. S.'s lawyer was either told so by someone, or he thought it necessary to employ a council. They are forever playing a losing game into each other's hands. I am very sorry to hear you have been so ill. I hope sincerely you will soon recover, and do not, I pray you, sit so close to your business; for it is not one that contributes to the happiness of the many, only the few, who ought not, in my opinion, to indulge in such useless luxuries at the expense of so many who are even now at a loss for food. Of late we have had many arguments concerning the respect that all men pay to property. Now what do you think of this affair? I wish much to know if your ideas on this subject correspond with ours! I will not tell you what they are yet as I have an excellent reason which you will acknowledge when you hear it. The post has just brought me a letter from Mr. Shelley's sister, who says that her father is doing all in his power to prevent his being arrested. I think even his family pride must long to give way on the present occasion. [*Paper torn*] keeps everything a secret, but Mrs. Shelley tells her son everything she hears. I will write again soon and tell you everything that takes place. With every good wish for your happiness, in which we all unite, believe me most affectionately your friend,

H. SHELLEY.

We think of going to our favourite Nantgwillt, but not yet. You will certainly hear from me again at this house before we can go. Let me hear from you soon.

HARRIET SHELLEY TO CATHERINE NUGENT

[LOW WOOD INN, WESTMORELAND], <sup>(1)</sup>

Sunday, October 11 [1813].

MY DEAR MRS. NUGENT,

We are again among our dear mountains. One week has sufficed to perform a journey of more than 300 miles, with my sweet babe,

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(1) In the autumn of 1813, Shelley's thoughts turned once more towards Wales, and by October he seems to have thought of revisiting the Lakes. The carriage which he procured some months before was called into service, and besides Harriet, her little daughter

who I am most thankful to say has received no injury from the journey. I am now staying at Low Wood Inn, which is close to the Lake of Winandermere in Westmoreland. We do not wish any one to know where we are. Therefore if any one should ask you I rely upon [your] friendship for not satisfying their curiosity. Have you seen Daniel? We were obliged to discharge him, for his conduct was so unprincipled that it was impossible to have him in our service any longer. Is Mr. Lawless out of prison yet? Had he not taken us in as he did, Bysshe would have done something for him; but his behaviour was altogether so dishonest that Mr. Shelley will not do anything for him at present. If he wished it he could not, for he is obliged to pay 3 for 1, which is so ruinous that he will only raise a sufficient [sum] to pay his debts. In November he is to see his father; but I do not expect they will settle anything, for Mr. S. will never give way to his son in the least. How has your health been since I heard from you last? I sincerely hope you are better, and that you will take care of yourself, I wish you could see my sweet babe. She is so fair, with such blue eyes, that the more I see her the more beautiful she looks. Some day, my dear friend, I hope you will come to England, and pay us a visit. When we get our dear Nantgwillt, then I may make sure of you. Mr. S. joins me and Eliza in kind regards to you, and may you ever be happy is the best and first wish of your sincere friend,

H. SHELLEY.

Direct your letter to me at Mrs. Calvert's, Greta Bank, Keswick, *Cumberland*.

HARRIET SHELLEY TO CATHERINE NUGENT

EDINBURGH,

October 20 [1813].

MY DEAR MRS. NUGENT,

My last letter was written from the lakes of Cumberland, where we intended to stay till next Spring; but not finding any house that would suit us we came on to this far-famed city. A little more than two years has passed since I made my first visit here to be united to Mr. Shelley. To me they have been the happiest and longest years of my life. The rapid succession of events since that time make the two years appear unusually long. I think the regular method of measuring time is by the number of different ideas which a rapid succession of events naturally give rise to. When I look back to the time before I was married I seem to feel I have lived a

Ianthe, and Eliza Westbrook, Shelley persuaded his friend Peacock to accompany them. The party reached Warwick by October 6, and a few days later they reached Low Wood Inn. After visiting the Calverts and failing to obtain a house, they decided to push on to Edinburgh, where they arrived about the middle of October. I have drawn upon Professor Dowden's "Shelley," Vol. I, pp. 391-3, for the above note.



long time. Tho' my age is but eighteen, yet I feel as if I was much older. Why are you so silent, my dear friend? I earnestly hope you are not ill. I am afraid it is nearly a month since I heard from you. I know well you would write oftener if you could. What is your employment on a Sunday? I think on those days you might snatch a few minutes to gratify my wishes. Do not direct your letter to me at Mrs. Calvert's; but to the post office in this city. We think of remaining here all this winter. Tho' by no means fond of cities, yet I wished to come here, for when we went to the lakes we found such a set of human beings living there that it took off all our desire of remaining among the mountains. This City is, I think, much the best. The people here are not so intolerant as they are in London. Literature stands on a higher footing here than anywhere else. My darling babe is quite well, and very much improved. Pray let me hear from you soon. Tell me if I can do anything for you. Mr. Shelley joins me and Eliza in kind regards to you, whilst I remain your affectionate friend,

H. S.

Do not tell anyone where we are.

HARRIET SHELLEY TO CATHERINE NUGENT

No. 36 FREDERICK STREET, EDINBURGH,

[Postmark, "23 Nov., 1813."]

MY DEAR MRS. NUGENT,

Your letter called forth the most lively feelings of regret. It is so long a time since I received a letter from you that I began to feel the greatest anxiety on your account. How much do I feel for your ill state of health. Tell me if I can be of any service to you. How are you situated with respect to personal comfort and attendance? Have you anyone by you who can sympathize with you? If you have not let me come and attend you. It is the office of a friend to soothe the languid moments of illness. The mind looks for sympathy more at such a time than when in perfect health. I am afraid Lawless has practised upon you, as he did upon us. Some time back he wrote to Mr. S. about Daniel, who lived with us, saying we had not treated him well. Now the truth is this—we were very fond of this man: he appeared so much attached to us, with so much honesty and simplicity, that we kept him tho' of no use whatever. For the whole time he stayed with us he never did anything. Afterwards he turned out very ungrateful, and behaved so insolent that we were obliged to turn him away. This is the man Lawless wrote about; but do not think I am offended at what you say of him, as I know it proceeds from the goodness of your heart, and I only wish the object were more deserving of your kindness. There has been no conciliation between Mr. [S. and ?] his father. Their opinions are so contrary, that I do not think there is the least chance of their being reconciled. His father is now ill with the gout; but there is no danger I suppose. If there was he would send for his son and be reconciled to him. I sincerely hope

this will find you better. You know what pleasure it would give me to render you any service. Therefore do not let a false opinion of justice keep you from applying to me in anything in which I can serve you. Mr. Shelley and Eliza join me in all good wishes for the recovery of your health, and believe me most firmly, your attached friend,

H. SHELLEY.

189. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG

[36 FREDERICK STREET], EDINBURGH,<sup>1</sup>

Nov[ember] 26, 1813.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

I have written to you several times since I received your letter at Bracknell. My letters were directed to you at Stopton in Durham, but I suppose that you had nothing particular to communicate in return—as, indeed, their contents were not of extraordinary importance.

I am happy to hear that you have returned to London, as I shall shortly have the pleasure of seeing you again. I shall return to London alone. My evenings will often be spent at the N[ewton]'s, where, I presume, you are no unfrequent visitor.

Your novel is now printed.<sup>2</sup> I need not assure you with what pleasure this extraordinary and animated tale is perused by me. Every one to whom I have shown it

<sup>1</sup> Professor Dowden says that the Shelleys reached Edinburgh by mid October, or a little later. They stayed at 36 Frederick Street.

<sup>2</sup> Hogg's novel, "Memoirs / of / Prince Alexy. Haimatoff. / Translated from / the original Latin MSS. / under the inspection of / the Prince, / By / John Brown, Esq. / London : / Printed for T. Hookham, / 15 Old Bond Street, / 1813." pp. 236, 12 mo., published Nov. 8, 1813. Although a copy of this rare little book was secured by the British Museum in 1878, Professor Dowden was the first to identify it as Hogg's, and he made known the discovery in his article, "Some Early Writings of Shelley," published in the *Contemporary Review*, Sept., 1884, when he also drew attention to the fact that Shelley had reviewed the book in the *Critical Review* for December, 1814. Shelley's review, and a part of Professor Dowden's article, were issued together in 1886 as one of the Shelley Society's publications under the editorship of Mr. Thomas J. Wise.

agrees with me in admitting that it bears indisputable marks of a singular and original genius. Write more like this. Delight us again with a character so natural and energetic as Alexy—vary again the scene with an uncommon combination of the most natural and simple circumstances: but do not persevere in writing after you grow weary of your toil; “*aliquando bonus dormitat Homerus*;” and the swans and the Eleutherarchs are proofs that you were a little sleepy.

I have for some time given myself to study. I have read “Tacitus,” many of Cicero’s philosophical works (who is, in my estimation, one of the most admirable characters the world ever produced), and Homer’s “Odyssey.” I am now studying Laplace, “*Système du Monde*,” and am determined not to relax until I have attained considerable proficiency in the physical sciences.

I have examined Hume’s reasonings with respect to the non-existence of external things, and, I confess, they appear to me to follow from the doctrines of Locke. What am I to think of a philosophy which conducts to such a conclusion?—*Sed hæc hactenus*.

A new acquaintance<sup>1</sup> is on a visit with us this winter. He is a very mild, agreeable man, and a good scholar. His enthusiasm is not very ardent, nor his views very comprehensive: but he is neither superstitious, ill-tempered, dogmatical, or proud.

I have translated the two Essays of Plutarch, *περὶ σαρκοφαγίας*, which we read together. They are very excellent. I intend to comment upon them, and to reason in my preface concerning the Orphic and Pythagoric system of diet.<sup>2</sup> Adieu! Believe me to be ever sincerely attached to you. My dear friend,

I am yours affectionately,

P. B. SHELLEY.

<sup>1</sup> Thomas Love Peacock.

<sup>2</sup> Shelley apparently is here referring to his work, “/A / Refutation / of / Deism : / in / a Dialogue. / ΣΤΝΕΤΟΙΣΙΝ / London : /

## 190. To ———

EDINBURGH,  
28 Nov[ember, 1813.]

## (Fragment)

. . . I have been compelled since I last wrote yesterday, to draw upon you for £30 for short date. I have to request that you would not return it, as the consequences would be, *our being driven out of our lodgings*. As the emergency is very pressing I doubted not but that I might depend upon your friendly assistance until the raising of £5,000,  
. . .

## 191. TO TIMOTHY SHELLEY

BRACKNELL,

March 13, 1814.

I lament to inform you that the posture of my affairs is so critical that I can no longer delay to raise money by the sale of *post-obit* bonds to a considerable amount.<sup>1</sup> I trust

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Printed by Schulze and Dean, / 13 Poland Street, / 1813," / where he quotes from Plutarch's essay on eating flesh. There is no reference to the subject in the short preface. Professor Dowden has had the good fortune to come across two copies of this exceedingly rare book, one of which he purchased for the British Museum. This copy was formerly the property of Thomas Hookham, and it bears his name on the fly leaf. Mr. Buxton Forman states in his "Shelley Library" that an extract from this work was printed in *The Model Republic* for Feb., 1843. I am informed by my friend, Mr. John A. Hookham, that his cousin, Thomas Hookham, a son of Shelley's friend, was a contributor to the *Model Republic* at about this date, and although I do not know of what his contributions consisted, it is not unlikely that he may have sent in the extract from his father's copy of "a Refutation of Deism," which was printed in that periodical.

<sup>1</sup> In his negotiations with the money lenders Shelley probably realised how important it was that the validity of his marriage as a minor in Edinburgh should not be questioned. Perhaps he remembered that he had only partially fulfilled the conditions of the Scottish marriage laws. On March 22nd Shelley and Godwin went to Doctor's Commons to obtain a licence, and on March 24, Shelley and Harriet were married at St. George's Church by Edward Williams, curate, in the presence of Harriet's father, Mr. John Westbrook, and another witness.





*From a photograph by Rosa M. Whitlaw*

HIGH ELMS, BRACKNELL



that the many expedients which I have employed to avoid this ruinous measure will testify the reluctance with which my necessities compel me at length to have recourse to it. I need not urge the vast sacrifices which money-lenders require, nor press upon your attention that I put it out of my power to unsettle the estate in any manner by conceding to their demands. Upon your good wishes and consoling assurances I rely with the most entire confidence. I know that you do not lack the will but only the power of doing everything which I could reasonably expect. But surely my grandfather must perceive that his hopes of preserving and perpetuating the integrity of the estate will be frustrated by neglecting to relieve my necessities; he knows that I have the power, which, however reluctantly, I shall be driven to exert, of dismembering the property should I survive himself and you. I do not take the liberty of frequently addressing you, but I hope the urgency of the occasion will be thought sufficient to excuse the present exercise of the licence you permitted.

## 192. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG

BRACKNELL,

March 16, 1814.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I promised to write to you, when I was in the humour. Our intercourse has been too much interrupted for my consolation. My spirits have not sufficed to induce the exertion of determining me to write to you. My value, my affection for you, have sustained no diminution; but I am a feeble, wavering, feverish being, who requires support and consolation, which his energies are too exhausted to return.

I have been staying with Mrs. B[oinville]<sup>1</sup> for the last

<sup>1</sup> The following description of Mrs. Boinville is derived from Prof. Dowden's charming sketch of that lady in his "Life of Shelley," Vol. I, p. 378 *et seqq.*, to which the reader is referred. Harriet

month ; I have escaped, in the society of all that philosophy and friendship combine, from the dismaying solitude of myself. They have revived in my heart the expiring flame of life. I have felt myself translated to a paradise, which has nothing of mortality, but its transitoriness ; my heart sickens at the view of that necessity, which will quickly divide me from the delightful tranquillity of this happy home—for it has become my home. The trees, the bridge, the minutest objects, have already a place in my affections.

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Boinville and her sister Cornelia, Mrs. Newton, were daughters of Mr. Collins, a cultured, liberal-minded and wealthy West Indian planter who resided in England. His house was visited by many of the constitutional emigrants from France, among whom was M. de Boinville, an *émigré*, formerly a *fermier général*, whose property had been confiscated by the revolutionary government. When M. de Boinville declared his love to Miss Collins, and her father objected to the match on the score of his poverty, she decided to elope with her lover to Gretna Green, where she was united to him by the blacksmith ; the couple were afterwards married a second time according to the rites of the Church of England. Mrs. Boinville had an income of her own, on which she and her husband managed to live. Their daughter Cornelia, born in 1795, afterwards became Mrs. Turner. In 1812 M. de Boinville went to Russia with Napoleon and died during the retreat from Moscow in February, 1813, shortly after the death of his wife's father, Mr. Collins. The sorrow that had clouded the life of Mrs. Boinville had turned her hair quite white, but a certain youthful beauty of her face was still retained. In allusion to her appearance, Shelley named her Maimuna in recollection of the mysterious spinner in Southey's "Thalaba," for

" Her face was as a damsel's face,  
And yet her hair was gray."

In a letter from Bracknell to the cynical Hogg, dated March 11, 1814, Mrs. Boinville says in allusion to Shelley's visit : " I will not have you despise homespun pleasures. Shelley is making a trial of them with us, and likes them so well, that he is resolved to leave off rambling, and to begin a course of them himself. Seriously, I think his mind and body want rest. His journeys after what he has never found, have racked his purse and his tranquillity. He is resolved to take a little care of the former in pity to the latter, which I applaud, and shall second with all my might. He has deeply interested us. In the course of your intimacy he must have made you feel what we now feel for him. He is seeking a house close to us ; and, if he succeeds, we shall have an additional motive to induce you to come among us in the summer."



My friend, you are happier than I. You have the pleasures as well as the pains of sensibility. I have sunk into a premature old age of exhaustion, which renders me dead to everything, but the unenviable capacity of indulging the vanity of hope, and a terrible susceptibility to objects of disgust and hatred.

My temporal concerns are slowly rectifying themselves ; I am astonished at my own indifference to their event. I live here like the insect that sports in a transient sunbeam, which the next cloud shall obscure for ever. I am much changed from what I was. I look with regret to our happy evenings at Oxford, and with wonder at the hopes which in the excess of my madness I there encouraged. Burns says, you know,

Pleasures are like poppies spread,  
You seize the flower—the bloom is fled ;  
Or like the snow-falls in the river,  
A moment white—then lost for ever.

Eliza<sup>1</sup> is still with us—not here !—but will be with me when the infinite malice of destiny forces me to depart. I am now but little inclined to contest this point. I certainly hate her with all my heart and soul. It is a sight which awakens an inexpressible sensation of disgust and horror, to see her caress my poor little Ianthe, in whom I may hereafter find the consolation of sympathy. I sometimes feel faint with the fatigue of checking the overflowings of my unbounded abhorrence for this miserable wretch. But she is no more than a blind and loathsome worm, that cannot see to sting.

I have begun to learn Italian again. I am reading

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<sup>1</sup> A month later Eliza Westbrook took her final departure from the Shelley household. Mrs. Boinville again writing to Hogg from Bracknell, on April 18, 1814, says : " Mrs. N[ewton] is wonderfully recovered. Air and exercise, and friendly conversation, are just restoring her good looks. Shelley is again a widower ; his beauteous half went to town on Thursday with Miss Westbrook, who is gone to live, I believe, at Southampton."

Beccaria, " *Dei delitti e pene.*"<sup>1</sup> His essay seems to contain some excellent remarks, though I do not think that it deserves the reputation it has gained. Cornelia assists me in this language. Did I not once tell you that I thought her cold and reserved? She is the reverse of this, as she is the reverse of everything bad. She inherits all the divinity of her mother.

What have you written? I have been unable even to write a common letter. I have forced myself to read " *Beccaria* " and Dumont's " *Bentham.*" I have sometimes forgotten that I am not an inmate of this delightful home—that a time will come which will cast me again into the boundless ocean of abhorred society.

I have written nothing, but one stanza, which has no meaning, and that I have only written in thought:

Thy dewy looks sink in my breast;  
 Thy gentle words stir poison there;  
 Thou hast disturbed the only rest  
 That was the portion of despair!  
 Subdued to Duty's hard control,  
 I could have borne my wayward lot;  
 The chains that bind this ruined soul  
 Had cankered then—but crushed it not.

This is the vision of a delirious and distempered dream, which passes away at the cold clear light of morning. Its surpassing excellence and exquisite perfections have no more reality than the colour of an autumnal sunset. Adieu!

Believe me truly and affectionately yours,

P. B. SHELLEY.

I hear that you often see the N[ewton]s. Present my kindest regards to Mrs. N[ewton]; remember me also to her husband, who, you know, has quarrelled with me, although I have not consented to quarrel with him.

<sup>1</sup> Cesare Marchese de Beccaria (1735?-1794). The book which Shelley was reading (on Crimes and Punishments), is an argument against capital punishment and tortures, published in 1764, and was the outcome of Beccaria's studies of the French encyclopædists. The essay was received in France with enthusiasm, notably by Voltaire and Diderot, who published commentaries.

## 193. TO JOHN WILLIAMS

[April 14, 1814.]

(Fragment)

DEAR WILLIAMS,

If I were not absent from London I would certainly see you. But I have gone to some distance.

It is perfectly impossible that I should meet the bill in September next. I have no prospect of getting money until my Grandfather's death. I should only decieve [sic] you, and increase your distress by signing such a bond.

I wish that you would call upon my Solicitor, <sup>1</sup>Mr. Amory, 59 Old Bond Street, as I am unable to come to town. He would instruct you in the best possible security I can give you, and that you shall have. He is averse to my granting any *post-obits*. I am willing, however, to do so to three times the amount of the sum, therefore if this proposal pleases you, do not go to Mr. Amory.

JOHN WILLIAMS, Esq.

[Endorsed, P. B. SHELLEY, Esq.  
April 14, 1814.]

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<sup>1</sup> Name erased here and an interlineation by Shelley of Mr. Amory's name.

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Eliza Westbrook, who had lived with the Shelleys during the whole of their married life, must be reckoned as an important factor in our consideration of Shelley's separation from Harriet. Had she left their house some months earlier, events might have ordered themselves differently. The intense loathing with which Shelley regarded his sister-in-law finds expressions in his letter to Hogg on March 16, 1814, and a month later she departed from the Shelley household. The cold and unsympathetic manner that Harriet assumed towards Shelley at this time may have been caused by his undisguised dislike of her beloved sister. "His violent antipathy," says Hogg, with regard to Shelley's aversion to Eliza Westbrook, "was probably not less unreasonable than his former excess of deference, and blind compliance and concession towards a person whose counsels and direction could never have been prudent, safe or

judicious." At this most critical period Harriet foolishly allowed herself to be influenced by Eliza Westbrook, and she was probably acting under her advice when some months earlier she prevailed upon Shelley (whose affairs were extremely embarrassed) to provide her with a carriage, silver-plate and expensive clothes. The idea that she should care for such things was altogether repugnant to him, who had formerly said of Harriet that "the ease and simplicity of her habits" constituted in his eyes her greatest charm. After the birth of her first child (which she refused to suckle, notwithstanding Shelley's desire that she should do so), Harriet's manner underwent a change. "Her studies," Hogg tells us, "which had been so constant and exemplary, had dwindled away to nothing, and Bysshe had ceased to express any interest in them, and to urge her, as of old, to devote herself to the cultivation of her mind. When I called upon her, she proposed a walk, if the weather was fine, instead of the vigorous and continuous readings of preceding years. The walk commonly conducted us to some fashionable bonnet-shop; the reading, it is not to be denied, was sometimes tiresome, the contemplation of bonnets was always so. When I called upon Bysshe, Harriet was often absent; she had gone out with Eliza,—gone to her father's. Bysshe himself was sometimes in London, and sometimes at Bracknell, where he spent a good deal of his time in visiting certain friends [Mrs. Boinville and her daughter] with whom at this period he was in close alliance, and upon terms of the greatest intimacy, and by which connection his subsequent conduct, I think, was much influenced." ("Life of Shelley," Vol. II, pp. 500-1.) According to Mrs. Boinville's letter to Hogg of April 18, 1814 ("Life of Shelley," Vol. II, p. 533), Shelley was then at Bracknell. Harriet had gone to town, presumably to her father's, and Eliza Westbrook had taken her departure. Although Harriet had now become cold and proud, Shelley still hoped to regain her love, and in some verses inscribed "To Harriet, 1814" (first printed in Professor Dowden's "Life of Shelley," Vol. I, p. 413), he makes a pathetic appeal for her affection. Whether Harriet was moved by this appeal or not, we do not know. She evidently never intended to alienate herself from Shelley, but she was living in Bath during the early days of July, while Shelley had remained in London since the end of May, excepting for a period of ten days from June 8th to the 18th. Shelley, however, still continued to correspond with Harriet, as is shown by the following letter which she addressed to Thomas Hookham on July 6 or 7, 1814, from 6 Queen's Square, Bath.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"You will greatly oblige me by giving the enclosed to Mr. Shelley. I would not trouble you, but it is now four days since I have heard from him, which to me is an age. Will you write by return of post, and tell me what has become of him. If you tell me that he is well I shall not come to London; but if I do not hear from you or him, I shall certainly come, as I cannot endure this dreadful state of suspense. You are his friend, and you can feel for me.

"I remain yours truly,

"H. S."



[Although Shelley's own pecuniary affairs in 1814 were most unsatisfactory, his admiration for Godwin was such that he engaged to help him out of his embarrassments by assisting him to raise a sum of money, said to be no less than three thousand pounds. This was the first of these negotiations on behalf of Godwin which continued to be such a source of trouble to Shelley almost till his last days. He had not been to Godwin's house since March 22 when he went with him to procure his marriage license. But it was now necessary for Shelley to be much in Godwin's company, and after he returned to London on July 18 he joined the Skinner Street household each day at dinner. It was during these days that Shelley first came into contact with Mary Godwin, who had just returned from Scotland on a visit to the Baxters. On June 8, the date of Lord Cochrane's trial, Hogg first saw Mary Godwin. He met Shelley in Cheapside, and walked with him through Newgate Street to Godwin's shop in Skinner Street. Shelley enquired for Godwin, who was not at home, and while he was waiting for the philosopher in his bookroom, "the door was partially and softly opened. A thrilling voice called 'Shelley!' A thrilling voice answered 'Mary!' And he darted out of the room, like an arrow from the bow of the far-shooting king. A very young female, fair and fair-headed, pale indeed, with a piercing look, wearing a frock of tartan, an unusual dress in London at the time, had called him out of the room. He was absent a very short time—a minute or two, and then returned. 'Godwin is out; there is no use in waiting.' So we continued our walk along Holborn. 'Who was that, pray?' I asked; 'a daughter?' 'Yes.' 'A daughter of William Godwin?' 'The daughter of Godwin and Mary.'"]

Suggestions have been made that Harriet was unfaithful to Shelley before their separation, and that she was in love with a Major Ryan who is mentioned in her correspondence with Miss Nugent. Apparently there is nothing to support this supposition; on the contrary, the evidence is entirely in her favour. Peacock, Hogg and Hookham, all of whom knew her intimately, believed her to be perfectly innocent of any guilt, and Thornton Hunt and Trelawny shared the same belief. On the other hand, Shelley is said to have been convinced to the contrary in July, 1814, and to have held this opinion to the day of his death. But if Shelley had not thought her guilty, the fact that he was certain she no longer loved him was sufficient in his sight to make it impossible for him to live with Harriet as her husband.

The convictions on the subject of marriage that he had expressed in "Queen Mab" in 1813 remained his convictions in 1814. He felt he was free to give his heart to Mary, with whom he was now deeply in love. Harriet did not realise that she had lost Shelley, and she came to London at his request on July 14, when Shelley disclosed to her his position. Peacock says "The separation did not take place by mutual consent. I cannot think that Shelley ever so represented it. He never did so to me: and the account which Harriet herself gave me of the entire proceeding was decidedly contradictory to any such supposition. He might well have said, after

seeing Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin, '*Ut vidi ! ut perii !*' Nothing that I ever read in tale or history could ever present a more striking image of a sudden, violent, irresistible, uncontrollable passion, than that under which I found him labouring when, at his request, I went up from the country to call on him in London. Between his old feelings towards Harriet, *from whom he was not then separated*, and his new passion for Mary, he showed in his looks, in his gestures, in his speech, the state of a mind, suffering, 'like a little Kingdom, the nature of an insurrection.' His eyes were bloodshot, his hair and dress disordered. He caught up a bottle of laudanum and said 'I never part from this.' He added 'I am always repeating your lines from Sophocles—

'Man's happiest lot is not to be :  
And when we tread life's thorny steep  
Most blest are they, who earliest free  
Descend to earth's eternal sleep.'

Again he said more calmly : 'Everyone who knows me must know that the partner of my life should be one who can feel poetry and understand philosophy. Harriet is a noble animal, but she can do neither.' I said, 'It always appeared to me that you were very fond of Harriet.' Without affirming or denying this, he answered : 'But you did not know how I hated her sister.'—*Fraser's Magazine*, Jan., 1860.

In connection with this subject, an important letter—dated Nov. 20, 1814—should be consulted giving Harriet Shelley's version of the causes that led to her separation from Shelley. (See Appendix.)

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## IX—FIRST VISIT TO THE CONTINENT

August 13, 1814—June 22, 1815

ELOPEMENT with Mary Godwin—Friendly Letter to Harriet—Continental Tour—Dark Days—Stolen Interviews—Letter from Mary—Isabel Baxter—The Sussex Farmer—The "Ancient Language"—Meeting in Gray's Inn Gardens—Death of Sir Bysshe Shelley—Shelley Refused Admission at Field Place—Receives Income of £1,000—Pays Income of £200 to Harriet—Tour in Devonshire.

### X 194. TO HARRIET SHELLEY<sup>1</sup>

TROYES, 120 miles from PARIS on the way to SWITZERLAND,  
August 13, 1814.

MY DEAREST HARRIET,

I write to you from this detestable town; I write to show that I do not forget you; I write to urge you to come

<sup>1</sup> Shelley eloped with Mary Godwin from London on July 28, 1814. She left her father's shop in Skinner Street, before five o'clock that morning, accompanied by Jane Clairmont (the second Mrs. Godwin's daughter by her first marriage), and a few steps brought them to the corner of Hatton Garden, where Shelley was waiting with a post chaise. It is said that Jane was unaware of Mary's intended elopement, until she was persuaded to enter the chaise; and that she accompanied the lovers because she knew how to speak French, and they did not. At Dartford they took four horses, so as to gain speed. Dover was reached by four o'clock in the afternoon, and by six a small boat had been engaged and was ready to take them to Calais, a journey which they were informed would only take them two hours. After a long, stormy, and somewhat perilous passage, Calais was reached the next morning. Mrs. Godwin, who arrived at Calais shortly after the fugitives, had followed them down from London, and she endeavoured to persuade her daughter, Jane, to return with her, but without success. Shelley and these two young girls, in silk dresses, then resumed their journey. Passing through Boulogne and Abbeville, they reached Paris on August 2, and being detained there for some days for want of funds, they left again on August 8. Shelley purchased an ass to carry the luggage and Mary when she was tired, he and Jane intending to foot it to Switzerland. The ass proved useless and was sold, and a mule was purchased in its place. The journey then continued, but Shelley having sprained his ankle on August 12, was compelled

X Hotson adds 9 other letters to this one  
from Shelley to Harriet.



to Switzerland, where you will at last find one firm and constant friend, to whom your interests will be always dear—by whom your feelings will never wilfully be injured. From none can you expect this but me—all else are either unfeeling or selfish, or have beloved friends of their own, as Mrs. Boinville, to whom their attention and affection is confined.

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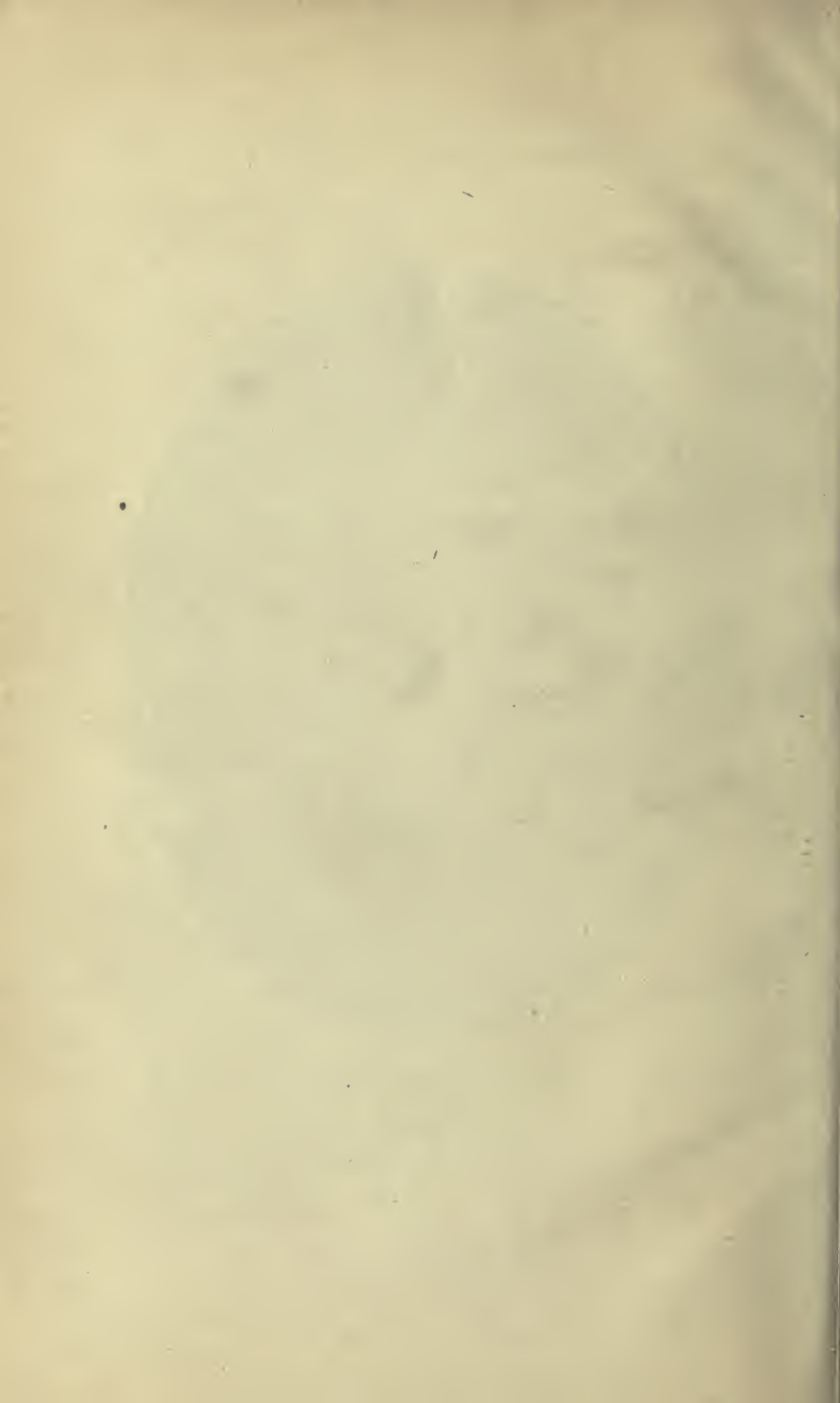
to ride. The same night Troyes was reached, where the travellers found accommodation at a filthy inn, and where Shelley wrote the above letter to Harriet. Here the mule was sold and an open carriage was purchased for five napoleons, and an incompetent driver was engaged. A week later they were at Neuchatel inquiring in vain for letters. A small supply of money was obtained, and with it Shelley pressed on to the Lake of Lucerne, and took two rooms in a chateau at Brunnen at a guinea a month for six months. They did not, however, stay there more than 48 hours, having resolved to return home by water. Taking advantage of the Reuss and the Rhine they could reach England without travelling a league on land. This they made a brave attempt to do, travelling through Germany and Holland, although sometimes they found it necessary to take a land conveyance. Rotterdam was at length reached, and from that place they sailed on September 8, arriving in London on September 13, and three days later they had taken lodgings at 56 Margaret Street, Cavendish Square. Prof. Dowden says: "Shelley's relations with Harriet, though at times they wore a friendly appearance, could hardly be sound or happy at heart. From the Continent he had written to her as though each of the now-divided pair might be sincerely regardful of the other's interests; and, if we may trust Miss Clairmont, he had sent from Calais or Paris, through Harriet, directions to his bankers to honour her calls for money as far as his account permitted. On landing penniless from Rotterdam, Shelley drove to his bankers, and ascertained that all his money had been drawn. Failing elsewhere to procure the means of paying for his passage and the smaller charges of waterman and coachman, he applied, says Miss Clairmont, to Harriet, and not without success, although to the twenty pounds which she handed to him were added the reproaches of an injured wife." ("Life," Vol. I, 463-4.) Shelley and Mary kept a journal from the day of their union until Shelley's death. Some extracts from Mary's journal were afterwards published in 1817 together with a few of Shelley's letters belonging to the year 1816, and an account of his visit to the Continent for that year, etc., as "History of a Six Weeks' Tour, Through a part of France, Switzerland, Germany and Holland. . . ." Professor Dowden has given a charming account of this tour in his "Life of Shelley," Vol. I, pp. 439-460, with extracts from "Shelley's Journal"; the episode reads like a passage from Rousseau's "Confessions."





*From a miniature by Reginald Easton, by permission of the Bodleian Library, to  
which it was presented by Jane, Lady Shelley*

MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT SHELLEY



I will write at length from Neufchatel, or you direct your letters "d'être laissé à la Bureau de Poste Neufchatel"—until you hear again. We have journeyed from Paris on foot, with a mule to carry our baggage; and Mary, who has not been sufficiently well to walk, fears the fatigue of walking. We passed through a fertile country, neither interesting from the character of its inhabitants nor the beauty of the scenery. We came 120 miles in four days; the last two days we passed over the country that was the seat of war. I cannot describe to you the frightful desolation of this scene; village after village entirely ruined and burned, the white ruins towering in innumerable forms of destruction among the beautiful trees. The inhabitants were famished; families once independent now beg their bread in this wretched country; no provisions; no accommodation; filth, misery, and famine everywhere. (You will see nothing of this on your route to Geneva). I must remark to you that, dreadful as these calamities are, I can scarcely pity the inhabitants; they are the most unamiable, inhospitable, and unaccommodating of the human race. We go by some carriage from this town to Neufchatel, because I have strained my leg and am unable to walk. I hope to be recovered by that time; but on our last day's journey I was perfectly unable to walk. Mary resigned the mule to me. Our walk has been, excepting this, sufficiently agreeable; we have met none of the robbers they prophesied at Paris. You shall hear our adventures more detailed if I do not hear at Neufchatel that I am soon to have the pleasure of communicating to you in person, and of welcoming you to some sweet retreat I will procure for you among the mountains. I have written to Peacock to superintend money affairs; he is expensive, inconsiderate, and cold, but surely not utterly perfidious and unfriendly and unmindful of our kindness to him; besides, interest will secure his attention to these things. I wish you to bring with you the two deeds which Tahourdin has to prepare for you, as also a copy of the settlement.

Do not part with any of your money. But what shall be done about the books? You can consult on the spot. With love to my sweet little Ianthe, ever most affectionately yours, S.

I write in great haste ; we depart directly.

195. TO MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT GODWIN

[LONDON,

MONDAY, October 24, 1814.]

Staples Inn is within the jurisdiction of Middlesex. You may meet me with perfect safety at Adams', No. 60 Fleet Street ; I shall be in the shop precisely at twelve o'clock. This separation is a calamity not to be endured patiently ; I cannot support your absence. I thought that it would be less painful to me ; but I feel a solitariness and a desolation of heart where you have been accustomed to be. But, my beloved, this will not last ; prudence and self-denial will discomfort our enemies. I shall meet you soon ; be punctual. Bring the letters.<sup>1</sup>

196. TO MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT GODWIN

[LONDON,

AFTERNOON OF MONDAY, October 24, 1814.]

I could not meet you at Adams' ; I was unable to come

<sup>1</sup> The period between Shelley's return from France in September, 1814, and January, 1815, when the death of Sir Bysshe took place, was one of dire poverty and privation for Shelley and Mary. Prof. Dowden says that "the days of sorest trial, including those of severance [of Mary] from Shelley, lay between October 23rd and November 9th." On Saturday evening, October 22, a letter, addressed to Shelley, was handed into his lodgings in St. Pancras. The letter was from Fanny Godwin, who warned Shelley, it would seem, of some design against his personal liberty, in which directly or indirectly the Hookham brothers were believed to be concerned. The debt was apparently one of Harriet's, for which, of course, Shelley was responsible, and perhaps Hookham had informed the creditor—Chartres—of Shelley's address. He endeavoured to raise £50 for Chartres's debt, but apparently he did not succeed, for Harriet promised to raise the money herself. Shelley, however, had to leave the St. Pancras lodgings for fear of arrest for debt. (Dowden's "Shelley," Vol. I, 488-490.)



before *one*, and of course I missed you. My own beloved girl, we shall soon be restored to each other. The wretchedness of our separation I am convinced will endow me with eloquence and energies adequate to the peril. I am mournful and dejected *now*, but it is exquisite pleasure that I feel compared with the happiest moments of former times. Yes ; a few days—perhaps a few hours—and the most inveterate of our enemies cannot deprive us of each other.

I have spent the day at Ballachy's [one of the "lawyers' holes."] I have been indefatigable in painting to him the horrid aspect of my affairs ; he is indolent and listless, but not like the Hookhams—a cool villain. He sent for a friend of his, Mr. Watts, a stockbroker.

Mr. Watts is an old, somewhat benevolent-looking, bald-headed man. He said he would perhaps lend me £400 ; he will give his answer on Thursday [October 27]. He seemed touched by my misfortunes, and indignant at the treachery of the Hookhams. I have reason to think that, if he lends me this money on *post-obit*, I may place the action to the credit of human nature.

My imagination is confounded by the uniform prospect of the perfidity, wickedness, and hardheartedness of mankind.

Mary most amply redeems their blackest crimes ! But I confess to you that I have been shocked and staggered by Godwin's cold injustice. The places where I have seen that man's fine countenance bring bitterness home to my heart to think of his cutting cruelty.

I care not for the Hookhams ; I'll tear their hearts out by the roots, with irony and sarcasm, if I find that they have dared to lift a thought against me. But in my absence from you, light of my life, my very spirit of hope. I have at moments almost felt despair to think how cold and worldly Godwin has become.

When, when shall I meet you ? I am at the London Coffee House. Write to me, but do not send a porter ; send Peacock, or come yourself. *Ουκ έχω αργυριον.*

I send you the *Times* newspaper ; see where I have marked with ink, and stifle your horror and indignation till we meet.<sup>1</sup>

I so passionately love my own Mary that we must not be absent long. Give my love to Jane. I think that she has a sincere affection for you.<sup>2</sup>

Εμον κριτεριον των αγαθων τοδε.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The late Mr. W. G. Craig discovered in the *Times* for Saturday, October 22, 1814, a letter of over two columns on the Abolition of the Slave Trade, giving very dreadful pictures of the horrors of the slavers' caravans, chiefly drawn from Mungo Park's "Travels," a book from which Shelley read aloud to Mary in December, 1814.

<sup>2</sup> FROM MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT GODWIN TO SHELLEY

[LONDON,

TUESDAY, October 25, 1814.]

For what a minute did I see you yesterday. Is this the way my beloved, we are to live till the 6th ? In the morning when I wake I turn to look for you. Dearest Shelley, you are solitary and uncomfortable. Why cannot I be with you, to cheer you and press you to my heart ? Ah ! my love, you have no friends ; why then should you be torn from the only one who has affection for you ? But I shall see you to-night, and this is the hope that I shall live on through the day. Be happy, dear Shelley, and think of me ! Why do I say this, dearest, and only one ? I know how tenderly you love me, and how you repine at your absence from me. When shall we be free from fear of treachery ? I send you the letter I told you of from Harriet, and a letter we received yesterday from Fanny (<sup>1</sup>) ; the history of this interview I will tell you when I come, but perhaps as it is so rainy a day Fanny will not be allowed to come at all. I was so dreadfully tired yesterday that I was obliged to take a coach home. Forgive this extravagance, but I am so very weak at present, and I had been so agitated through the day, that I was not able to stand ; a morning's rest, however, will set me quite right again ; I shall be well when I meet you this evening. Will you be at the door of the Coffee House at five o'clock, as it is disagreeable to go into such places ? I shall be there exactly at that time, and we can go into St. Paul's, where we can sit down.

I send you "Diogenes," as you have no books.<sup>(2)</sup> Hookham was so ill-tempered as not to send the book I asked for.

<sup>3</sup> "This is my test of things that are good."

(<sup>1</sup>) This letter made appointments for a meeting between Fanny and Clara.

(<sup>2</sup>) Probably a translation of Wieland's "Diogenes."

## 197. TO MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT GODWIN

[? Same day as last, October 25, 1814.]

I have written an extremely urgent letter to Harriet to induce her to send money. I have written also to Hookham, who did not call upon Peacock. I have told Harriet that I shall be at Pancras when her answer arrives. I shall see you to-night, my beloved Mary, fear not. I have confidence in the fortunate issue of our distresses. I am desolate and wretched in your absence; I feel disturbed and wild even to conceive that we should be separated. But this is most necessary, nor must we omit caution even on our unfrequent meetings. Recollect that I am lost if the people can have watched you to me. I wander restlessly about; I cannot read or even write; but this will soon pass. I should not inflict my own Mary with my dejection; she has sufficient cause for disturbance to need consolation from me. Well, we shall meet to-day. I cannot write, but I love you with so unalterable love that the contemplation of me will serve for a letter. If you see Hookham, do not insult him openly; I have still hopes. We must not resign an inch of hope. I will make this remorseless villain loathe his own flesh in good time; he shall be cut down in his season; his pride shall be trampled into atoms; I will wither up his selfish soul by piecemeal.

*Σμερνδναισι γαμφηλαισι συριξων φονον.*<sup>1</sup>

## 198. TO MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT GODWIN

[? THURSDAY MORNING, October 27, 1814.]

I write to tell you when you come to bring the £5 with

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<sup>1</sup> "Hissing forth murder with awful jaws." (Æschylus, "Prometheus" 355.)

you. Perhaps it were as well to bring the pistols to Davidson's.<sup>1</sup>

All is yet confused and undecided. I write this at Ballachy's.

Do not on any account call at Peacock's or write to him again. I will explain at three o'clock.

I am full of business and of hopes.

Watch if you are followed.

My dearest, best Mary, let me see your sweet eyes full of happiness when we meet; all will be well. I hope to have deserved many kisses.<sup>2</sup>

#### 199. TO MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT GODWIN

[NIGHT of October 27, 1814.]

Oh! my dearest love, why are our pleasures so short and so interrupted? How long is this to last?

Know you, my best Mary, that I feel myself, in your absence, almost degraded to the level of the vulgar and impure. I feel their vacant, stiff eyeballs fixed upon me, until I seem to have been infected with their loathsome meaning—to inhale a sickness that subdues me to languor. Oh! those redeeming eyes of Mary, that they might beam upon me before I sleep! Praise my forbearance—oh! beloved one—that I do not rashly fly to you, and at least

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<sup>1</sup> Shelley had parted with his solar microscope for £5 to Davidson, a pawnbroker, of Skinner Street.

#### <sup>2</sup> MARY TO SHELLEY.

[THURSDAY MORNING, October 27, 1814, in reply to the last.]

MY OWN LOVE,

I do not know by what compulsion I am to answer you, but your porter says I must; so I do.

By a miracle I saved your £5 and I will bring it. I hope, indeed, oh my loved Shelley, we shall indeed be happy.

I meet you at three and bring heaps of Skinner Street news. Heaven bless my love and take care of him.

HIS OWN MARY.



secure a moment's bliss. Wherefore should I delay ; do you not long to meet me ? All that is exalted and buoyant in my nature urges me towards you, reproaches me with the cold delay, laughs at all fear and spurns to dream of prudence. Why am I not with you ?

Alas ! we must not meet.

I have written a long letter to Jane, though in no mood for writing ; I have directed it in a feigned hand to surprise her.

I did not, for I could not, express to you my admiration of your letter to Fanny ; the simple and impressive language in which you clothed your argument, the full weight you gave to every part, the complete picture you exhibited of what you intended to describe, was more than I expected.

How hard and stubborn must be the spirit that does not confess you to be the subtlest and most exquisitely fashioned intelligence ; that among women there is no equal mind to yours ! And I possess this treasure ! How beyond all estimate is my felicity ! Yes ; I am encouraged—I care not what happens ; I am most happy.

Meet me to-morrow at three o'clock in St. Paul's, if you do not hear before.

Adieu ; remember love at vespers before sleep. I do not omit *my* prayers.

## 200. TO MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT GODWIN

[FRIDAY NIGHT, October 28, 1814.]

My beloved Mary, I know not whether these transient meetings produce not as much pain as pleasure. What have I said ? I do not mean it. I will not forget the sweet moments when I saw your eyes—the divine rapture of the few and fleeting kisses. Yet, indeed, this must cease ; indeed we must not part thus wretchedly to meet

amid the comfortless tumult of business ; to part, I know not how.

Well, dearest love, to-morrow—to-morrow night. That eternal clock ! oh, that I could “ fight the steeds of lazy-paced Time ! ” I do not think that I am less impatient now than formerly to re-possess—to entirely engross—my own treasured love. It seems so unworthy a cause for the slightest separation. I could reconcile it to my own feelings to go to prison if they would cease to persecute us with interruptions. Would it not be better, my heavenly love, to creep into the loathliest cave so that we might be together ?

Mary, love, we must be re-united. I will not part from you again after Saturday night. We must devise some scheme. I must return. Your thoughts alone can waken mine to energy ; my mind, without yours, is dead and cold as the dark midnight river when the moon is down. It seems as if you alone could shield me from impurity and vice. If I were absent from you long, I should shudder with horror at myself ; my understanding becomes undisciplined without you. I believe I must become in Mary’s hands, what Harriet was in mine. Yet how differently disposed—how devoted and affectionate—how, beyond measure, reverencing and adoring the intelligence that governs me ! I repent me of this simile ; it is unjust ; it is false. Nor do I mean that I consider you much my superior, evidently as you surpass me in originality and simplicity of mind. How divinely sweet a task it is to imitate each others’ excellences, and each moment to become wiser in this surpassing love, so that, constituting but one being, all real knowledge may be comprised with the maxim *γνῶθι σεαυτον* (know thyself), with infinitely more justice than its narrow and common application !

I enclose you Hookham’s note ; what do you think of it ?

My head aches ; I am not well ; I am tired with this comfortless estrangement from all that is dear to me.

My own dearest love, good-night.

I meet you at Staples Inn at twelve to-morrow—half an hour before twelve.

I have written to Hooper and Sir J. Shelley.<sup>1</sup>

## 201. TO MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT GODWIN

[WEDNESDAY MORNING, November 2, 1814.]

MY BELOVED GIRL,

I think it dangerous that you should see me to-day, or at least until evening. I suspect that your or Jane's coming here might afford an occasion of discovery against which it would be impossible to provide by any foresight. I consent to resign this exquisite pleasure only because it is so clearly apparent to me that the most horrid consequences might ensue. I think that you had better continue to send to the Hookham's in the course of the day to learn

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<sup>1</sup> MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT GODWIN TO SHELLEY

(A fragment)

[FRIDAY NIGHT,

Oct. 28, 1814.]

So this is the end of my letter, dearest love. What do they mean? (<sup>1</sup>) I detest Mrs. Godwin; she plagues my father out of his life; and these — Well, no matter. Why will Godwin not follow the obvious bent of his affections, and be reconciled to us? No; his prejudices, the world, and *she*—do you not hate her my love?—all these forbid it. What am I to do?—trust to time, of course, for what else can I do? Good-night, my love; to-morrow I will seal this blessing on your lips. Dear, good creature, press me to you, and hug your own Mary to your heart. Perhaps she will one day have a father: till then be everything to me, love, and, indeed, I will be a good girl and never vex you. I will learn Greek, and—but when shall we meet when I may tell you all this, and you will so sweetly reward me? Oh! we must meet soon, for this is a dreary life. I am weary of it: a poor widowed deserted thing, no one cares for her; but ah, love, is not that enough? I have a very sincere affection for my Shelley. But good night; I am wofully tired and sleepy. Sleeping I shall dream of you, ten to one, when you, naughty one, have quite forgotten me. Take me—one kiss—well, that is enough. To-morrow!

(<sup>1</sup>) Referring to Mrs. Godwin's letter. *Note by Professor Dowden.*

the course of Mrs. Stewart's affair.<sup>1</sup> It is this, of course, which I dread. How lonely and desolate are these solitary nights! This wretched and comfortless waking I cannot contemplate without a feeling that approaches to despair! How terrible if month after month I should pass without you, or only to see you by snatches or moments! All now depends on avoiding Mrs. Stewart. I shall not remain at Peacock's—I will not incur the risk. A few days—perhaps a few hours—will terminate our difficulties. Love me, my dearest, best Mary, love me in confidence and security; do not think of me as one in danger, or even in sorrow. The remembrance and expectation of such sweet moments as we experienced last night consoles, strengthens, and redeems me from despondency; there is eternity in these moments; they contain the true elixir of immortal life. My best love, adieu.<sup>2</sup>

[Addressed],  
MARY.

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<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Stewart was one of the creditors. *Note by Professor Dowden.*

The following is Mary's reply:

<sup>2</sup> [THURSDAY NIGHT, November 3, 1814.]

DEAREST LOVE,—I am so out of spirits; I feel so lonely; but we shall meet to-morrow; so I will try to be happy. Gray's Inn Gardens is, I fear, a dangerous place; yet can you think of no other? I received your letter to-night. I wanted one, for I had not received one for nearly two days; but do not think I mean anything by this, my love<sup>(1)</sup>. I know you took a long, long walk yesterday, and so you could not write; but I, who am at home, who do not walk out, I could write to you all day, love. Another circumstance has made me feel more solitary—that letter I received to-day.<sup>(2)</sup> Dear Shelley,

<sup>(1)</sup> Shelley's letter of Wednesday morning, directed "Mary," had been delivered early by hand. *Note by Professor Dowden.*

<sup>(2)</sup> A letter bringing to a close Mary's relations with her girl-friend in Dundee, Isabel Baxter. The letter was written by Mr. David Booth, a man remarkable for his talents and force of character, of whom we shall hear again. Miss Isabel Baxter was engaged to be married (if she was not already married) to Mr. Booth. *Journal, November 3*: "Received a letter from Mr. Booth; so all my hopes are over then. Ah! Isabel, I did not think you would act thus." *Note by Professor Dowden.*



## 202. TO MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT GODWIN

THURSDAY EVENING [November 3, 1814.]

I received both your letters this evening, they were apparently written at different times. The post is too uncertain and dilatory to be endured.

The threatened arrest of Godwin on Thursday I have not

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you will say I was deceived; I know I am not. I know her unexampled frankness and sweetness of character; but what must that character be who resists opinions preach—Oh dear! what am I writing? I am indeed disappointed. I did think Isabel perfectly unprejudiced. She adores the shade of my mother. But then a married man. It is impossible to knock into some people's heads that Harriet is selfish and unfeeling, and that my father might be happy if he chose. By that cant of selling his daughter I should half suspect that there has been some communication between the Skinner Street folks and them. Heigho, love, such is the world. How you philosophize and reason about love! Do you know, if I had been asked I could not have given one reason in its favour, yet I have as great opinion as you concerning its exaltedness; and love very tenderly, to prove my theory. Adieu for the present; it has struck eight, and in an hour or two I will wish you good-night. Well, so now I am to write a good-night, with the old story of "I wish I could say it to you." Yes, my love, it has indeed become an old story, but I hope the last chapter is come. I shall meet you to-morrow, love; if you do but get money, and indeed you must, we will defy our enemies and our friends (for aught I see they are all as bad as one another), and we shall not part again. Is not that a delightful word? It shall cheer my dreams.

Oh! how I long to be at our dear home, where nothing can trouble us, neither friends nor enemies! Don't be angry at this love, for you know that they are all a bad set; but Nantgwillt—do you not wish to be settled there, in a house you know, love, with your own Mary—nothing to disturb you, studying, walking? Oh! it is much better, believe me, not to be able to see the light of the sun for the mountains than for houses.

You do not say a word in your letter, you naughty love, to ease one of my anxieties—not a word of Lambert, of Harriet, of Mrs. Stewart, of money, or anything—but all the reasonings you used to persuade Mr. Peacock love was a good thing. Now you know I did not want converting; but my love, do not be displeased at my chattering in this way, for you know that the expectation of a letter from you when absent always makes my heart jump, so do you think it says nothing when one actually arrives?

Your own MARY, who loves you so tenderly.

heard of before this moment. So soon as I have finished this letter I shall seek for Lambert<sup>1</sup>; if my interference would ever have been effectual, it may still be so, as I learn that three days are always allowed before any proceeding is commenced. I should have delayed writing until after this visit, if I did not fear to lose the eight-o'clock delivery. I have seen the Farmer<sup>2</sup>; he requires that some responsible person should guarantee the payment of the money. I shall offer Hookham an indemnity to perform this piece of service. I suspect that there are very powerful persuasive reasons that will assist my plea. Of course I have yet heard no more of Ballarat. I am full of confidence and hope in this affair; I hardly doubt the event. Unless I were thus fully confident, I would not venture to excite your expectations. But to-morrow at three—at *three*—you will meet me at Gray's Inn Gardens, and the result will then be known!

My beloved Mary, do I not love you? Is not your image the only consolation to my lonely and benighted condition? Do I not love you with a most unextinguishable love? a feeling that well compensates for the altered looks of those who love none but themselves. What sentiment but disgust and indignation is excited by the desertion of those who fly because they think constancy *imprudent*!

The feeling is sweet, most ennobling, and producing a celestial balm, with which the sick and weary spirit reposes upon one who may not be doubted; to whom the slightest taint of suspicion is death—irrevocable annihilation. To-morrow, blest creature, I shall clasp you again—for *ever*. Shall it be so? This is the ancient language, that love alone can translate. Best, dearest, adieu—one kiss.

I have most hopes of the Sussex Farmer.

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<sup>1</sup> Godwin's creditor.

<sup>2</sup> A Sussex farmer, from whom Shelley hoped for a loan. *Prof. Dowden's Note.*

## 203. TO MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT GODWIN

[FRIDAY, NOV. 4, 1814.]

So my beloved boasts that she is more perfect in the practice than I in the theory of love. Is it thus? No, sweet Mary, you only meant that you loved me more than you could express; that reasoning was too cold and slow for the rapid fervour of your conceptions. Perhaps, in truth, Peacock had infected me; my disquisitions were cold—my subtleties unmeaningly refined; and I am a harp responsive to every wind—the scented gale of summer can wake it to sweet melody, but rough cold blasts draw forth discordances and jarring sounds.

My own love, did I not appear happy to-day?<sup>1</sup> For a few moments I was entranced in most delicious pleasure; yet I was absent and dejected. I knew not when we might meet again, when I might hold you in my arms, and gaze on your dear eyes at will, and snatch momentary kisses in the midst of one happy hour, and sport in security with my entire and unbroken bliss. I was about to return—whither? oh! I knew not, nor was it matter for concern—from you, from our delightful peace to the simple expectation of felicity. I *shall* be happy is not so divine as I *am*. “To be content to let ‘I dare not’ wait upon ‘I would,’ like the poor cat i’ the adage,” to those who love is feverish agitation and sickening disquietude; and my poor Mary that loves me with such tenderness and truth—is her loneliness no pain to me? But to-morrow night at half-past twelve!<sup>2</sup>

I called on Lambert at five, when we parted; he was absent from town; I am to meet him to-morrow morning.

<sup>1</sup> Mary and Clara had met Shelley in Gray's Inn Gardens. Clara was perhaps in the way, for she enters in her journal, “I am much disappointed in Shelley to-day. I thought him uniformly kind and considerate, but I find him act as weakly as other people.”

<sup>2</sup> The second Saturday night, when the bailiffs lost their power for twenty-four hours.

I called on Pike ; he proposes £12,000 ready money for the reversion of Goring Castle. Before I conclude anything it shall be fairly valued. I should think myself fortunate to get this price, although the expense of the building was so immense.

Hookham has been with me. I do not despair of arranging something with Charles,<sup>1</sup> so that £100 may be placed at my disposal. Hookham is to meet me with Charles on 'Change to-morrow. I shall previously have disposed of Ballachy to my purpose, and entertain some confidence of success.<sup>2</sup> H. seems interested in the affair. Mrs. B. will go to the London Coffee House to-morrow and call for my letters. I hope to hear from Sir John [Shelley-Sidney.] Mrs. Stewart's affair, which I have most of all at heart—that relentless enemy of all comfort—remains as it did. H. urges Tahourdin to complete it ; but she will not be present. I expect to hear from Hooper to-morrow. Thus it is my letters are full of money, whilst my being overflows with unbounded love and elevated thoughts. How little philosophy and affection consort with this turbid scene—this dark scheme of things finishing in unfruitful death ! There are moments in your absence, my love, when the bitterness with which I regret the unrecoverable time wasted in unprofitable solitude and worldly cares is a most painful weight ; you alone reconcile me to myself and to my beloved hopes.

Good-night my excellent love, my own Mary.

#### 204. TO MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT GODWIN

1814.

[Date uncertain.<sup>3</sup>]

Meet me at *one* and not at *three*, at St. Paul's. I will be

<sup>1</sup> Charles Clairmont, a son of Mrs. Godwin by her first husband.

<sup>2</sup> The journal tells us (October 31) of Ballachy's "rascally proposition for £300 a year till his [Shelley's] father's death for £15,000 of *post-obit.*"

<sup>3</sup> I find it difficult to assign this letter to November 7 or 8, yet it is more difficult to place it elsewhere. *Note by Prof. Dowden.*



there at *one*. Your "good-night," my own love, came most welcome. I did not forget to kiss you *ειδωλον Κερον* before I slept, and I slept last night, thanks to your sweet "good-night." I think we had better immediately get other lodgings, as now all danger but from Mrs. Stewart is over. What think you of Pimlico or Sloane Street? Talk of this with Jane before you come.

## 205. TO MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT GODWIN

[TUESDAY, Nov. 8, 1814.]

Call on me at four o'clock.

I have heard nothing. I have sent to Hookham; his answer is that he will call in the course of the day.

I shall now go out and seek lodgings; I shall not decide on them until I have Hookham's answer.

I saw Hogg last night; I am disappointed in him, though my expectations were very moderate.

I cannot write.

My dearest, best love, only one day more, and we meet. Your affection is my only and sufficient consolation. I find that I have no personal interest in any human being but you, and you I love with my whole nature.

## 206. TO MR. HAYWARD

13 ARABELLA ROAD,

PIMLICO, [LONDON],

April 7, 1815.<sup>1</sup>

DEAR SIR,

I wish you would as soon as convenient inform me of the terms on which the security granted to Mr. Billing would be cancelled. It is important to me that you should allow no further delay to take place in this communication.

<sup>1</sup> On Jan. 6, 1815, Sir Bysshe Shelley died, and his son Timothy, Shelley's father, succeeded to the baronetcy. Shelley went to Field Place, but by his father's orders he was refused admittance. By June Sir Timothy agreed to an arrangement by which Shelley was to receive an income of £1,000 a year. He at once sent Harriet

I think the lease of the House ought to be advertised for auction without delay.

Your obliged, etc., servant,  
P. B. SHELLEY.

207. To JOHN WILLIAMS

At Mrs. WADLING'S,  
TORQUAY, DEVONSHIRE,  
June 22, 1815.

DEAR WILLIAMS,

I have some idea of visiting Merionethshire again, particularly if I should hear of any house which would afford any probability of suiting me. I write to you, therefore, to inquire whether there is in any remote and solitary situation a house to *let* for a time, with the prospect of purchase when my affairs will permit. I did not ask Mr. Nanney the terms of Dolmgleneux; perhaps you can inform me of them. I assure you that it was not without much inconvenience that I paid the bond of £100. I would, if possible, have relieved you from the whole, but I have no hesitation in promising a final arrangement in the autumn. It will not suit me to purchase any house at present, but should the solitude and beauty of any place you can recommend or obtain for me induce me to wish to make it my permanent residence, I should have the command of money in the winter sufficient to enable me to possess it; still it best accords with my purpose to try at first.

Yours truly,  
P. B. SHELLEY.

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£200 to pay her debts, and he arranged for a sum of £200 a year to be paid to her in quarterly instalments. With the annuity of £200 which Mr. Westbrook allowed his daughter, she was provided with an income of £400 a year. Shelley probably remained in London until June. Mrs. Shelley says that in the summer of 1815 he made a tour along the coast of Devonshire; on June 22 (the date of the next letter), he was at Torquay, and on July 27 Mary dates a letter to Shelley, who was looking for a house, from Clifton. In August the Shelleys settled in a house at Bishopgate,

## X.—BISHOPGATE—"ALASTOR"

August, 1815—April 24, 1816

IMPROVED Health—Thames Excursion to Lechlade—Classical Studies—Financial Correspondence with Godwin—Charles Clairmont—Birth of William Shelley—Negotiations with Timothy Shelley—Deed of Disclaimer—Godwin's "harshness and cruelty"—"Alastor" Published—Letter to Southey—Godwin's "Pecuniary Distress"—Shelley's Tribute to Mary—A "base fee."

### 208. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG

BISHOPGATE,<sup>1</sup>

August, 1815.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I am glad to hear of your safe arrival and the innocent symptoms of diseased action which you detail. My life has been very regular and undisturbed by new occurrences since your departure. My health has been considerably improved under Lawrence's care, and I am so much more free from the continual irritation under which I lived, as

<sup>1</sup> Peacock says (*Fraser's Magazine*, Jan., 1860, p. 97) "In the Summer of 1815, Shelley took a furnished house at Bishopgate, the eastern entrance of Windsor Park, where he resided till the summer of 1816 . . . I was then living at Marlow, and frequently walked over to pass a few days with him. At the end of August, 1815, we made an excursion on the Thames to Lechlade, in Gloucestershire, and as much higher as there was water to float our skiff. It was a dry season, and we did not get much beyond Inglesham. . . We started from, and returned to Old Windsor, and our excursion occupied about ten days. This was, I think, the origin of Shelley's taste for boating, which he retained to the end of his life." Besides Shelley and Peacock, Mary and Charles Clairmont were of the party. Shelley's letter to Hogg, referred to in the next, describing the excursion is not forthcoming, but Prof. Dowden has printed in his "Shelley," I, p. 528, an amusing letter dated Sep. 16, 1815, from Charles Clairmont to his sister Jane (self-named, and henceforth known, as Clare or Claire), giving an account of the water-party. At Oxford they stayed from seven in the evening till four o'clock the next afternoon. After seeing the Bodleian Library and the

to devote myself with more effect and consistency to study. I have read some of the orations of Cicero. That against Verres contains some passages of wonderful power, although on the whole I consider them inferior in the interest they produced to those of his metaphysical essays which I have read. This must surely spring from their intrinsic inferiority, for it is unusual that an address to the passions should awaken less interest than an appeal to reason. I have begun also the "Pharsalia." My opinions on the relative merits of Lucan and Virgil is no less unpopular than some of the others I entertain.

It excites my wonder to consider the perverted energies of the human mind. That so much benevolence and talent, as the missionary who travelled with you seemed to possess, should be wasted in such profitless endeavours, nor serve to any other end than to expose its possessor to perpetual disappointment. Yet who is there that will not pursue phantoms, spend his choicest hours in hunting after dreams, and wake only to perceive his error and regret that death is so near? One man there is, and he is a cold and calculating man, who knows better than to waste life, but who alas! cannot enjoy it. Even the men who hold dominion over nations fatigue themselves by the interminable

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Clarendon Press, they "visited the very rooms where the two noted infidels, Shelley and Hogg (now, happily, excluded the society of the present residents), pored, with the incessant and unwearied application of the alchymist, over the certified and natural boundaries of human knowledge." When they reached Lechlade, and could proceed no further on account of the water-weeds, Shelley wanted to go on, and to traverse various rivers and canals until they reached the Falls of the Clyde, a distance of two thousand miles. The idea was given up when it was ascertained that the Commissioners required £20 for the privilege of passing the Severn Canal. Clairmont adds "We have all felt the good effects of this jaunt, but in Shelley the change is quite remarkable; he has now the ruddy, healthy complexion of the autumn upon his countenance, and he is twice as fat as he used to be." Peacock was in error in stating that Shelley resided at Bishopgate till the summer of 1816, as he started for his second visit to the Continent at the beginning of the May of that year. The last letter that I have been able to find dated from Bishopgate is on Feb. 26, 1816, to William Godwin.





*Photo by Henry W. Taunt & Co., Oxford*

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, OXFORD

The two right-hand windows on the first floor are those of Shelley's Rooms, which now form a part of the Common Room



pursuit of emptiest visions ; the honour and power which they seek is enjoyed neither in acquirement, possession or retrospect ; for what is the fame that attends the most skilful deceiver or destroyer ? What the power which awakens not in its progression more wants than it can supply ?

You will see in the papers that continuance of the same system which the Allies had begun to pursue ; and a most spirited remonstrance of the King of France's ministers against the enormities of their troops. In considering the political events of the day I endeavour to divest my mind of temporary sensations, to consider them as already historical. This is difficult. Spite of ourselves the human beings which surround us infect us with their opinions ; so much as to forbid us to be dispassionate observers of the questions arising out of the events of the age.

It is already the end of August. Those leaves have lost their summer glossiness which, when I see you again, will be fluttering in the wind of autumn. Such is mortal life.

Your affectionate friend,

P. B. S.

209. TO THOMAS JEFFERSON HOGG

BISHOPGATE,

September, 1815.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Your letter has lain by me for the last week, reproaching me every day. I found it on my return from a water excursion on the Thames, the particulars of which will have been recounted in another letter. The exercise and dissipation of mind attached to such an expedition have produced so favourable an effect on my health, that my habitual dejection and irritability have almost deserted me, and I can devote six hours in the day to study without difficulty. I have been engaged lately in the commencement of several literary plans, which, if my present temper

of mind endures, I shall probably complete in the winter. I have consequently deserted Cicero, or proceed but slowly with his philosophic dialogues. I have read the Oration for the poet Archias, and am only disappointed with its brevity.

I have been induced by one of the subjects which I am now pursuing to consult Bayle. I think he betrays great obliquity of understanding and coarseness of feeling. I have also read the four finest books of Lucan's "Pharsalia"—a poem, as it appears to me, of wonderful genius and transcending "Virgil." Mary has finished the fifth book of the "Æneid," and her progress in Latin is such as to satisfy my best expectations.

The east wind—the wind of autumn—is abroad, and even now the leaves of the forest are shattered at every gust. When may we expect you? September is almost passed, and October, the month of your promised return, is at hand, when we shall be happy to welcome you again to our fireside.

No events, as you know, disturb our tranquillity. Adieu.

Ever affectionately yours,

PERCY B. SHELLEY.

210. TO WILLIAM LAING  
(Edinburgh)

LONDON,

September 27, 1815.

SIR,

On unpacking the books which arrived from Edinburgh, I discovered the following have been omitted, doubtless thro' mistake:

Drummond's "Academical Questions."

Euripides' "Hippolytus" (Marsh).

Euripides' "Heraclidæ" (Elmsley).

Hoogeveen's "De Particulis."

I should feel myself much obliged if you would send these



books, which have undoubtedly been mislaid and confounded with yours—addressed to me at Mr. Hookham, Old Bond Street.

Your obedient servt.,

P. B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],  
Mr. WILLIAM LAING,  
Bookseller,  
Edinburgh.

211. TO MR. HAYWARD  
(London)

BISHOPGATE,

October 19, 1815.

DEAR SIR,

If I do not mistake you are Mr. Godwin's legal adviser in a suit proceeding against him from Mr. Hogan. The debt I imagine is £200 or £250. The object of my letter is to learn (if you think yourself justified in favouring me with the information) Mr. Godwin's precise situation with respect to this suit. I have heard that it must arrive at its conclusion next term, that there are no means of delay. I am anxious to know how far that statement is correct. If, however, it is impossible to prolong it beyond the beginning of next month, I wish to enquire whether Mr. Hogan is absolutely determined not to accommodate the affair in any manner short of the actual payment of the debt and costs, or whether Mr. Godwin has offered no security which he considers safe. In the latter case I imagine that I could suggest thro' my own liability a means of relieving Mr. Godwin from the action. You would oblige me by not informing Mr. Godwin of my application, until it shall appear that it is likely to be attended with some favourable issue.

Your very obedient servant,

PERCY B. SHELLEY.

—, HAYWARD, Esq.,  
Took's Court,  
London.

212. TO LACKINGTON, ALLEN & CO.  
(London)

BISHOPGATE,  
Dec[ember] 17, 1815.

GENTLEMEN,

The parcel arrived safe containing most of the books of the original order.

I wish any edition of Quintus Curtius, which is not extremely dear, and which contains the supplements of Freinhemius, to be sent as early as convenient.

Your obedient ser[van]t,

P. B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],  
Messrs. LACKINGTON & Co.,  
Finsbury Square,  
London.

[Postmark] Dec. 18, 1815.

213. TO WILLIAM GODWIN  
(London)

BISHOPGATE,  
January 7,<sup>1</sup> 1815, [for 1816.]

SIR,

I will endeavour to give you, as clear as possible a history of the proceedings between myself and my father.

A small portion of the estates to which I am entitled in reversion were comprehended in the will of Mr. John Shelley, my great-uncle, and devised to the same uses as the larger portion which was settled on my father's marriage jointly by my grandfather and father. This portion was valued at £18,000, which my father purchased of me with

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<sup>1</sup> Shelley probably came to London during the ensuing week, for he addressed the following note to his banker from Hanover Square, on "January 11, 1816. Mr. Shelley presents his compliments to Messrs. Brookes and Co., and requests the favour of their taking a receipt from Mr. John Billing, of Quality Court, when they pay a check which he will present for £13. 2s. 6d.—Messrs. Brooks & Co., Bankers, 25 Chancery Lane."

an equivalent of £11,000. I signed on this occasion two deeds; the one was to empower my attorney to suffer what is called a recovery, the other a counterpart of the deed of conveyance.

Before these transactions, however, and at the very commencement of our negotiations, I signed a deed which was the preliminary and the basis of the whole business. My grandfather had left me the option of recovering a life estate in some very large sum (I think £140,000) on condition that I would prolong the entail, so as to possess only a life estate in my original patrimony. These conditions I never intended to accept, although Longdill considered them very favourable to me, and urged me by all means to grasp at the offer. It was my father's interest and wish that I should refuse the conditions, because my younger brother would inherit, in default of my compliance with them, this life estate. Longdill and Whitton<sup>1</sup> therefore made an agreement that I should resign my rights to this property, and that my father, in exchange for this concession, should give me the full price of my reversion. In compliance with the terms of this agreement, I signed a deed importing that I disclaimed my grandfather's property. My father did not sign his part of the agreement, because he could not do so without forfeiting the new entail (which says that whoever in whatsoever manner endeavours to break through the intentions of the testator shall not enjoy the fortune), but Mr. Whitton engaged tacitly to Longdill that my father would buy the reversion on the terms already settled.

Now Whitton professes my father's willingness to proceed, but urges every consideration calculated to delay the progress of the affair. Longdill told me that he saw Whitton wished to procure as much delay as possible, but that he still thought that it was their intention not entirely to give up the negotiation. Whether both Whitton and Longdill

<sup>1</sup> Longdill and Whitton were the attorneys of Shelley and Sir Timothy Shelley respectively.

are not quietly making their advantage out of the inexperience and credulity of myself and my father is a doubt that has crossed my mind.

You say that you will receive no more than £1,250 for the payment of those encumbrances from which you think I may be considered as *specially* bound to relieve you. I would not desire to persuade you to sell the approbation of your friends for the difference between this sum and that which your necessities actually require, but the mention of your friends has suggested a plan to my mind which possibly you may be able to execute. You have undoubtedly some well-wishers who, although they would refuse to give you so large a sum as £1,200, might not refuse to lend it you on security which they might consider as unexceptionable. I think you could lay before any rich friend such a statement of your case as that, if he could refuse to lend £1,200 on my security, his desire of benefiting you must be exceedingly slight. There is every probability in favour of the arrangement with my father being completed within the year. I can give evidence of the negotiation between us.

If this prospect should fail, I still remain heir to property of £6,000 or £7,000 a year. Why not ask Grattan or Mackintosh, or Lord Holland, whom I have heard named as your. . . [*The rest of this letter is wanting.*]

214. TO WILLIAM GODWIN

(London)

BISHOPGATE,

Jan[uary] 18, 1816.

SIR,

I consent to sell an annuity which shall produce enough to cover Hogan's demand, on these conditions:—

That you shall agree to pay the interest until I am able



to discharge the principal. I shall take your word for the fulfilment of this part of the contract.

That entire secrecy should be observed. It will be necessary that the solicitor who engages in the management of the affair should defer registering the annuity for judgment for the period of a year.

Do you know the quarter whence the money can be produced? I would prefer any other than Hayward, for reasons which I could enumerate if it were necessary.

The person who proposed to lend £1,000, would probably lend a quarter of that sum. You had better apply to him in the first instance, and enquire whether he will do so. I, not residing in London, am obviously incompetent to conduct the affair.

Clairmont informs me that in a former instance he explained with you on the subject of the claim which you urge, to be repaid the £200 subtracted by me from the £1,200 of nominal debt which he agreed to state on your part, for the purpose of putting me in possession of the £200. He told you that he believed you to be mistaken in your construction of my message, and on explaining with me, I confirmed his remembrance of the real state of the arrangement.

Perhaps it is well that you should be informed that I consider your last letter to be written in a certain style of haughtiness and encroachment, which neither awes nor imposes upon me. But I have no desire to transgress the limits which you placed to our intercourse, nor in any future instance will I make any remarks but such as arise from the strict question in discussion.

Perhaps you do well to consider every word irrelevant to that question which does not regard your personal advantage.

P. B. SHELLEY.

I forgot to inform you that no paper has been signed by my father which regards the affair of the estate. The general intention and fundamental basis of the business

have been stated and admitted in many instances by Whitton in writing, though I should conceive not in a manner which constitutes a legal obligation.

[Addressed outside],  
W. GODWIN, Esq.,  
41 Skinner Street,  
Snow Hill,  
London.

215. TO WILLIAM GODWIN  
(London)

BISHOPGATE,  
January 21, 1816.

SIR,

It is impossible to procure any letter from Whitton, or any evidence of the affair with my father. Any attempt to possess myself of such a document would risk an entire destruction of my prospects in that quarter. But I apprehend that a reference to my banker would answer the same end. It would prove to the inquirer that I am in the regular receipt of £800 per annum. I should conceive that a person who had an opportunity of making fifteen per cent. of so small a sum as £200 or £300 would consider this fact a sufficient assurance of the safety of his loan.

Particularly when he reflects in addition upon the strong presumption which he can deduce from various circumstances of the approaching settlement of my affairs.

If the person who applied to you is, contrary to my expectation, disposed to think differently of the matter, then let Hayward be applied to.

There are some objections to Hayward, some of which incite me to require caution in treating with him, some demand explanation, and are only worth considering as they impede the loan.

1st. Secrecy is to be secured, which is somewhat difficult, unless his own interest is implicated.

2nd. This real or pretended want of confidence in my representations is to be overcome.

When I applied to him for the purpose of borrowing money for my own wants he inquired whether by the late arrangement with my father all incumbrances on the estate were cancelled. I replied in the affirmative since, although I did not know that Nash had been actually paid, yet an offer being then pending by which he was to receive £4,500 for what he purchased from me the year before at £2,600, I did not doubt, nor did Longdill doubt, but that he would resign on these terms his claim on the estate.

I spoke, therefore, according to my belief, according to the real fact, and according to the purpose for which alone it imported him to know when I replied that the estate was no longer incumbered. But, indeed, I know not whether Hayward would presume to make this accusation to anyone, whom he knew had direct communication with me, or concerning whom it might not reasonably be doubted whether the misrepresentations did not as probably originate with any informer or with himself. Hayward is to be applied to, if your person fails. But I hope the necessity will not arise. If you clearly perceive that there is no other mode of raising the money, I do not require a day's delay. You can either apply to Hayward, or I will write to him, as you choose.

If Hayward refuses, and we can raise money on my security in no manner, did it never suggest itself to you, that your signature joined with mine might effect what neither would effect singly ?

With respect to the question which you asked on the subject of the £200, I certainly never gave Clairmont the smallest ground for the representation on which your mistake rests. I accept, and thank you for your explanation. If you really think me vicious, such haughtiness as I imputed to you is perhaps to be excused. But I, who do not agree with you in that opinion, cannot be expected

to endure it without remonstrance. I can easily imagine how difficult it must be, in addressing a person whom we despise or dislike, to abstain from phrases, the turn of which is peculiar to the sentiments with which we cannot avoid regarding such a person. Perhaps I did wrong to feel so deeply or notice so readily a spirit of which you seem to have been unconscious.

P. B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],  
W. GODWIN, Esq.,  
41 Skinner Street,  
Snow Hill, London.

216. TO WILLIAM GODWIN  
(London)

BISHOPGATE,

January 23,<sup>1</sup> 1816.

SIR,

I fear that it is quite impossible to procure any documents from Longdill. I do not mean to say that if the loan cannot be procured without it, I will refuse to attempt to procure them. But Longdill is now out of town, and the few days that will pass during his absence may be employed in discovering whether we can do without him.

Hayward, it seems, must be applied to. Let this be done without delay. I should conceive that the same advantages which made it appear probable that the person you mentioned would find the money, would operate with greater force on Hayward.

I told Hayward that I did not know when the affair with my father would terminate, or even whether it might not be entirely abandoned.

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<sup>1</sup> On the day following, Jan. 24, William, the son of Shelley and Mary Godwin was born; he was named after his grandfather, William Godwin, baptised on March 9, 1818, died at Rome, June 7, 1819, and was buried, like his father, in the Protestant Cemetery at Rome.



I conceive that he relied in reality far more on my present income than my future expectations, and that if he declines to advance any additional loan, it will spring not from any doubt of the validity of my security, but because some object which he might have contemplated in his former services was not obtained.

As soon as we have procured Hayward's answer, we shall be certain that he will advance the money, or that he will not.

If he decides in the negative, I will lose no time in taking whatever measures may appear good to you for procuring it from some other quarter.

I am most undoubtedly in earnest, as much so as I should have been last November, had such explanations been made as I have since received, and the same spirit of promptitude shown to share with me the burthens incident to the pecuniary difficulties with which I have been so long surrounded.

I hope that you will not refrain from applying to Hayward on the ground that these letters from Whitton may possibly be procured. I have not myself even seen them that I recollect ; and it is most likely that they would be found to express only a general intention on my father's part to divide the estates, a fact of which Hayward certainly entertains no doubt. I am, indeed, earnest that you should not defer to put the question to Hayward.

I am sorry that I cannot appeal to my memory for the precise words of the message which you received with the £1,000 in the spring. I am certain only that it was not, because I am aware of arrangements made in my own mind, by which it could not be such as you represent Clairmont to have delivered it. My meaning was that you should receive no more than that £1,000 until the second settlement with my father, which was then expected in November. I consider that giving in your debt at £1,200, as an accommodation to me, enabling me to procure, as I did, £200, which I should not otherwise have received.

My message certainly in some manner expressed this view of the subject to Clairmont, and no other.<sup>1</sup>

P. B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],  
W. GODWIN, Esq.,  
41 Skinner Street,  
Snow Hill, London.

217. TO WILLIAM GODWIN  
(London)

BISHOPGATE,

January 25, 1816.

SIR,

Longdill told me a week ago that he was then going into the country for ten days. Relying on your information, however, I have written to him, requesting that he will immediately see Whitton, inform him of my dissatisfaction on the subject of his delay, and extort some satisfactory answer. This he was to have done ten days ago. At least until the result of this measure is known to me, I am unwilling to excite suspicions in Longdill that I am in treaty for borrowing money on annuity. The mode of address which you suggest would undoubtedly appear unnatural to me. I might destroy L.'s confidence in the regularity and prudence of my conduct at a time when perhaps the whole success of the affair with my father depends on its preservation.

Hayward, in November, was profuse in his professions both of willingness and ability to procure me money on annuity. If I wanted £1,000 he said that he could readily procure the sum. He knew at that period the uncertainty [of] the negotiations with my father. Perhaps he may believe that the chances are now multiplied against the probability of its accomplishment. At least, it appears

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<sup>1</sup> The £1,200 which Shelley had promised to procure for Godwin had been included by Sir Timothy in reckoning his son's debts.

to me, that the additional security which he would feel from your assertions that the interest was safe, may be considered sufficient to overbalance these contingencies. I feel unwilling, until you should have urged him on to this point, and extorted from him a declaration whether in the last resort he would refuse to serve you by negotiating the loan, to accede to the doubtful and difficult measure of obtaining the letters to which I have alluded, from Longdill. Add to which, it is very doubtful if they would, when procured, be serviceable or satisfactory.

A Mr. Bryan[t], a Sussex man, has written to me to know whether I would sell the reversion of a small estate in that country, on terms of 5 per cent. I have replied, that I cannot do so, being under engagement to sell the whole estate to my father ; but if this engagement should be annulled, I should be glad to listen to his proposal.

He writes in answer, that " he could find me purchasers at a fair price for sev[era]l things." He says he dines every day, during term, at Anderton's Coffee House, Fleet Street. If you entertain any doubt of Hayward, perhaps you had better see this Bryant, or I will do so, or write to him as appears good to you. But I am certainly anxious that you should urge Hayward to a decisive and immediate reply. I will spare no pains, or any danger which it is not evident ruin to incur, but that you shall have the money in March. If Hayward fails, do not fear an ultimate failure. I am persuaded that my situation is now widely different, and far more commanding and respectable than when I with difficulty procured money to live.

You seem strangely to have misunderstood the affair in April. Certainly I did fix on £1,200 as your contingent from the sum then raised, on purpose to apply £200 to my own demands ; which I should have been unable so to apply without your co-operation, unless, indeed, instead of £1,000 I had given you only £800, which your refusal to have co-operated in this manner would have compelled me, in self defence, however reluctantly, to do. I thought

you understood and acquiesced in this arrangement. There is nothing remarkable in this foolish mistake but the unskilfulness or unfaithfulness of our interpreters, and it is well that such imperfect intercourse did not, as in many instances it might, have produced more serious errors.

I should come to town willingly on the business of this loan, when it appears that my presence is required. If Hayward eventually refuses to negotiate it for us, then I certainly think some personal discussion is needed. I could perhaps then make clear to you the reasonableness of my reluctance to apply to Longdill. But I shall leave this subject henceforth entirely to your own feelings. Probably my feelings on such an occasion would not be less distressing than your own. So far as those feelings are concerned, I should certainly reluctantly entertain the idea of such an interview. But I would not sacrifice anything essential to the raising of this money to exempt myself from the sensations, however painful, which could not fail to arise on meeting a man, who having been once my friend, would receive me with cold looks and haughty words.

Frances and Mrs. Godwin will probably be glad to hear that Mary has safely recovered from a favourable confinement, and that her child is well.

P. B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],  
W. GODWIN, Esq.,  
41 Skinner Street,  
Snow Hill, London.

218. TO WILLIAM GODWIN  
(London)

BISHOPGATE,

January 28, 1816.

SIR,

A letter which I received from Longdill by yesterday's post decides, I fear, the question of applying to him for



the letters of Whitton. I will briefly recapitulate the contents. It says that in compliance with my requests he has applied to Whitton. He tells me that W. has by no means been idle in the affair. My father wishes to bring the matter to bear, but he judges it necessary previously to ask the Lord Chancellor's advice. This Longdill also considers essential even to my interest. The bill to be given in is now before counsel. Longdill's expression is, that it will cause considerable delay. It is evident now that my father's intentions are sincere. What time the Chancery affair will take we cannot know.

This much, however, is certain, that my Father desires to settle the thing, however awkward and long are the measures he takes for that settlement.

The arrangement in the spring could not be completed without a Chancery suit, though it is certain that there is not the smallest ground for a similar proceeding in the present instance. In all probability it is of a much simpler nature. I cannot obviously now procure Whitton's former letters. But surely Hayward can substantiate if he would take the trouble to inquire in an underhand and professional manner the facts which I now relate. These facts I imagine are sufficient to satisfy him if he only requires such satisfaction as he was contented with last autumn.

I forgot to answer one question. Nash's suit is nominally instituted by me, but really by my father, and for his interests and at his expense.

P. B. SHELLEY.

Since I wrote the former page, I have discovered Longdill's letter, which I thought I had mislaid. I enclose it for you to read and if you please to use.

Of course if you show it to Longdill you will use due caution about the last paragraph of it.

[Addressed outside],

W. GODWIN, Esq.,

41 Skinner Street,

Snow Hill, London.

## 219. TO WILLIAM GODWIN

(London)

6 GARDEN COURT, TEMPLE [LONDON],<sup>1</sup>

Friday night, February 16, 1816.

SIR,

In the course of a few weeks I shall certainly leave the neighbourhood of London, and possibly even execute my design of settling in Italy. I have felt it necessary to decide on some such measure in consequence of an event which I fear will make even a more calamitous change in your prospects.

It is the opinion of the lawyers that my father ought not to complete the intended affair with me and that he cannot arrange any other. If you do not feel it necessary to explain with me in person on this subject, I can state the detail in a letter. Such, however, is the bare fact. The impossibility of effecting anything by *post-obit* or sale of reversion has been already adverted to by me. I am far from retracting any engagement made for your benefit, but I cannot refrain from suspecting under these new circumstances how far I am justified, even by my sincere zeal for your interests, in signing the deed which, Hayward informs me, is in progress. You will believe that I am the more disinterested in what I say when I inform you that my own difficulties suspended by the intended settlement now come upon me with tenfold weight, so that I have every prospect of wanting money for my domestic expenditure.

I intended to have left town at two o'clock to-morrow; I will not do so, if you wish to see me. In that latter case, send a letter *by a porter* to Mr. Hogg's, of Garden Court, Temple, making your own appointment.

Yet I do not know that it is best for you to see me. On me it would inflict deep dejection. But I would not refuse anything which I can do, so that I may benefit

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<sup>1</sup> This letter was written at Hogg's chambers.

a man whom, in spite of his wrongs to me, I respect and love.

Besides I shall certainly not delay to depart from the haunts of men. Your interests may suffer from your own fastidiousness; they shall not be injured by my wayward hopes and disappointments.

I shall write to you by Sunday's post if I receive no answer to this letter.

Jane,<sup>1</sup> of course, is with you. She is uninformed as to the latest and most decisive particulars relating to the overthrow of my hopes.

P. B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],  
WILLIAM GODWIN, Esq.  
41 Skinner Street,  
Snow Hill.

220. TO WILLIAM GODWIN  
(London)

LONDON,

February 17, 1816<sup>2</sup>.

SIR,

I hasten to relieve your anxiety. I have seen Hayward and arranged with him to sign the deed at twelve o'clock next Monday week. In what I have said to him, as you will discover, I have taken every imaginable precaution that you should not be disappointed.

P. B. S.

[Addressed outside],  
WILLIAM GODWIN, Esq.,  
41 Skinner Street,  
Snow Hill.

<sup>1</sup> Jane Clairmont.

<sup>2</sup> This letter is endorsed (at the head) by Charles Clairmont, as follows:—

"The date of this letter is written in Godwin's handwriting—Most probably to remember by the date when the deed would be signed.—CH. CLAIRMONT."

221. TO WILLIAM GODWIN  
(London)

BISHOPGATE,

February 18, 1816.

SIR,

You will have received my letter in answer to yours sent to Garden Court in the course of Saturday evening. This will entirely satisfy you as to my intentions about the deed. I promised you further details by this post on the subject of the affair with my father. It is the opinion of the most eminent lawyers that my father cannot become a party to the projected arrangements without forfeiting the property devised by my grandfather's will. In consequence of this opinion, and for the purpose of ascertaining some other point not necessarily connected with my immediate interest, they recommend a suit in Chancery. They are desirous that their own opinion, however well founded, should be confronted with the Lord Chancellor's. It is, moreover, the duty of one of the Counsel, Mr. Butler, as trustee, to be extremely cautious in his conduct. Longdill entertains no doubt that the issue of this appeal will be unfavourable to my views. He considers the question indeed as already decided, and the proceedings in Chancery, so far at least as they regard that part of the affair, entirely superfluous.

I understand that the existence of two or three words in the will occasions this most unexpected change. The words are these:—"For the time being"—the application of those words to the present case is explained to be, that in case my father should survive myself and my infant son, my younger brother, at the expiration of his minority, might require my father to fulfil those conditions of the will which he would incapacitate himself from fulfilling by cutting off the entail. It is altogether a most complex affair, the words of the will being equivocal to a singular degree. A new difficulty arises also from the



import of my signature to the Deed of Disclaimer, as it is called, given in the presumption of the completion of this settlement. One thing alone is certain, that until my father's death I shall receive no portion of the estate.

How does this information affect your prospects? Does anything remain to be done by me? You have entire knowledge of my resources, my situation, and my disposition towards you; what do you think I can do, or I ought to do, to set you free?

I informed you that I should be in town on Monday week, at twelve o'clock, to sign the deed at Hayward's. My letter of Friday night asserts that I should not be in town again before I left the neighbourhood; but I did not foresee that the deed would not be ready at Hayward's or that there would be so much difficulty and expense in conveying it to Bishopgate.

P. B. SHELLEY.

To  
Mr. WILLIAM GODWIN,  
London.

222. TO WILLIAM GODWIN  
(London)

BISHOPGATE,

February 21, 1816.

SIR,

I saw Turner yesterday, who engaged to convey to you by that night's post a reassurance on the points which he called on me to ascertain. I should have written to you myself if I had not returned too late from a long walk with Turner, in which I endeavoured to make him understand as clearly as possible the present state of my affairs and my dispositions towards you.

I shall certainly not leave this country, or even remove to a greater distance from the neighbourhood of London, until the unfavourable aspect assumed by my affairs shall appear to be unalterable; or until all has been done by me

only to the restraint of my father. The estate of which I now speak is that which is the subject of the settlement of 1792.

My grandfather's will was dedicated by the same spirit which had produced the settlement. He desired to perpetuate a large mass of property. He therefore left the moiety of about £240,000 to be disposed of in the following manner. My father was to enjoy the interest of it *during his life*. *After my father's death* I was to enjoy the interest alone in like manner, conditionally, on my having previously deprived myself of the absolute power which I now possess over the settled estates of 1792 ; and so accept the reversion of a life annuity of £12,000 or £14,000 per an. in exchange for a reversion of landed property of 6, 7, or 8,000 per an. All was reversion. I was entitled, in no view of the case, to any immediate advantage.

My grandfather's will limited my option of accepting these conditions to one year from the date of his death. But I did not hesitate a moment to refuse them, nor until Longdill informed me that it was my father's desire and interest that I should act as I intended to act, did I see any necessity of making a secret of my resolution. I allowed Longdill, however, to manage these affairs in his own way ; and he agreed with Whitton that I should refuse to accept my grandfather's legacy and that my father should purchase of me my interest in the settled estates at a fair price. The project of this arrangement was very satisfactory to me, as I saw myself about to realize the very scheme best suited to the uncertainty of my health and the peculiarity of my views and situation, by the sacrifice of that which I never intended to accept.

I signed the deed of disclaimer for the purpose of making my father certain of my intentions, so that our operations need not wait for the expiration of the year appointed by my grandfather's will. If, as Turner says, I have the power to stand in the same situation with respect to my grandfather's will now as on the day of his death, that

power is entirely worthless, and must, as you see, be placed out of our consideration.

Now lawyers say that my father dares not buy my interest in the settled estates of 1792, because such an act might induce a forfeiture of the additional income he derives from concurring with the intentions of the will.

After this clear recapitulation of facts, with which I had imagined you to be fully acquainted, I entreat you not to adopt Turner's delusive inference, that because "I am ready and desirous to fulfil my engagements your difficulties are therefore at an end."

Your letter of this morning, indeed, throws a new light on Turner's intervention, at least as I regard it. The mistake, the vital mistake, he has made appears to me by no means consistent with the legal acuteness you describe him to possess. I cannot help thinking that you transfer your just appreciation of his taste and his wit to a subject on which the very subtlety essential to these qualifications leads him astray. Or perhaps you are right in this judgment, and he is not enough interested for you, not enough your friend to force his attention to the point. If he would think or act for your or my interests as for his own, then possibly he might deserve your opinion.

If, after this explanation, you continue to think that his suggestions would be valuable, I will contrive to see him without delay.

But without rejecting whatever Turner's kindness or experience could afford, are there no means at arriving at the same end? You do not understand the state of my affairs so exactly as a lawyer could explain it to you. You believe that I, from ignorance of law and the usages of the world, let pass opportunities of settling with my father. Cannot you explain the exact situation in which you stand with me to Sir James Mackintosh? He, I am informed, really desires to serve you but is unable. If he knew how much of your future comfort depends on your having a true conception of the state of my affairs,

surely he would with pleasure enter into such explanations with me as would make him master of the subject. His various life makes his experience far more valuable than that of Turner, even if you should judge that this latter surpassed him in intrinsic mental worth.

I will not add to the length of this letter by explaining a circumstance of no real moment but which asks a good many words ; I shall so soon see either Turner or some other interlocutor on your part.

I trust to your kindness that you will forbear showing this letter to Turner. I have spoken my real doubts of his efficiency which, should an occasion require, I would not shrink to repeat in his presence. But he is apt to take offence, and I am too generally hated not to feel that the smallest kindness from an old acquaintance is valuable.

P. B. SHELLEY.

February 27.

I open this letter to mention that for some days I shall be quite incapable of active exertion. I was seized last night with symptoms of irritable fever, and my state requires rest to prevent serious effects.

[Addressed outside],

WILLIAM GODWIN, Esq.,  
41 Skinner Street,  
Snow Hill, London.

224. TO WILLIAM GODWIN  
(London)

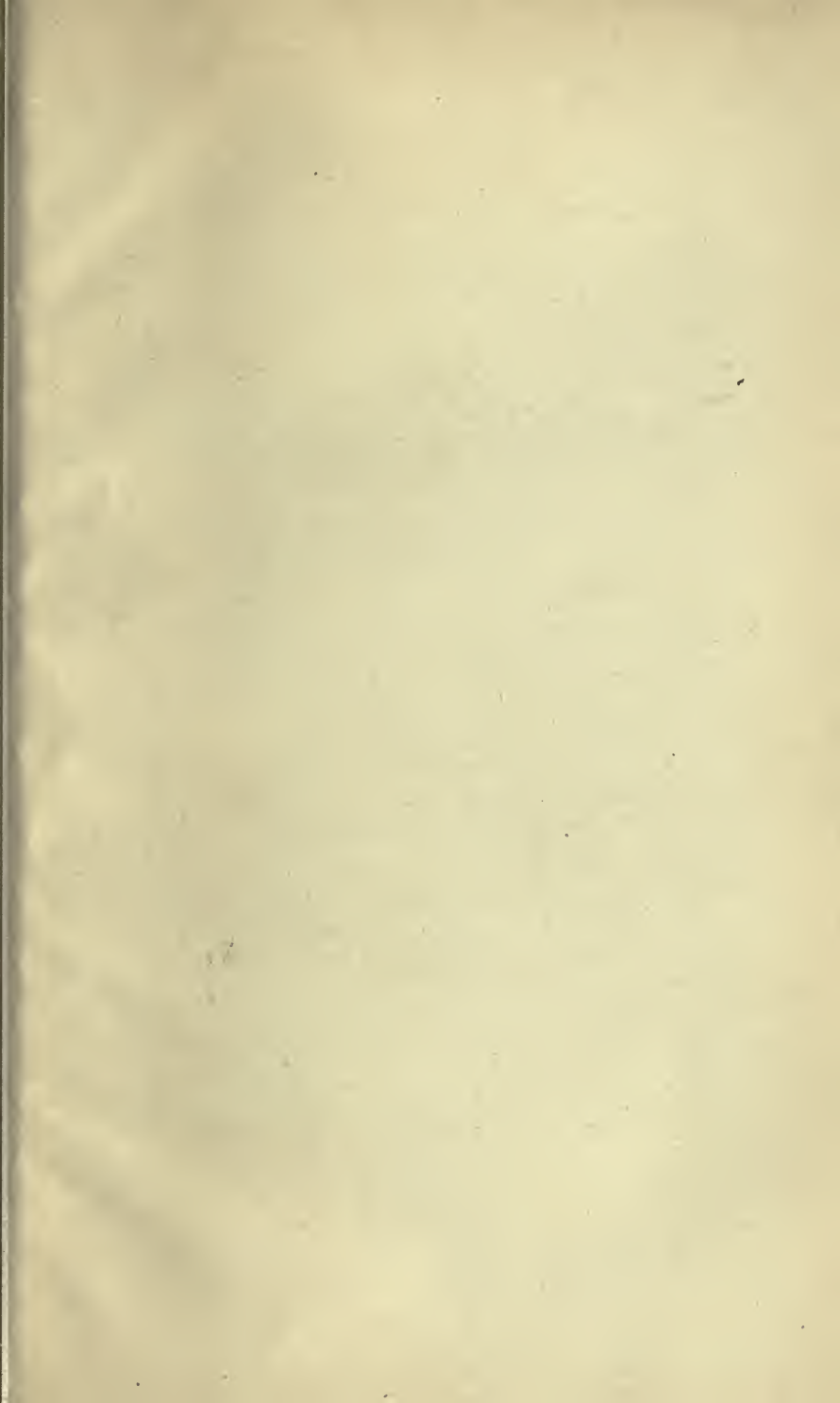
13 NORFOLK STREET, LONDON,

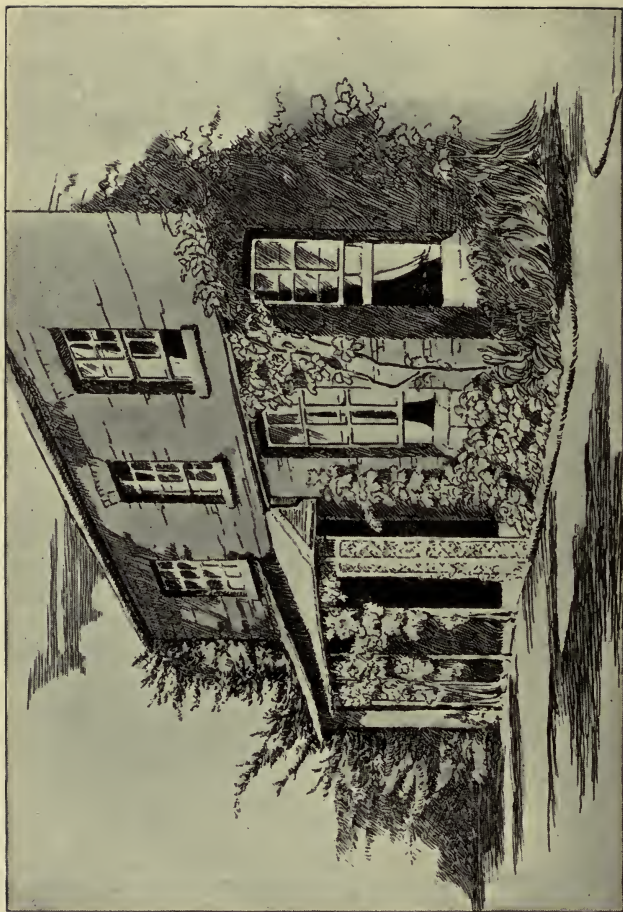
March 6, 1816.

SIR,

The first part of your letter alludes to a subject in which my feelings are most deeply interested, and on which I could wish to receive an entire explanation. I confess that I do not understand how the pecuniary engagements







*From a drawing by F. Clementson, after a photograph published in "The Bookman," by permission of Messrs.  
Hodder & Stoughton*

SHELLEY'S COTTAGE, BISHOPGATE, WINDSOR FOREST

subsisting between us in any degree impose restrictions on your conduct towards me. They did not, at least to your knowledge or with your consent, exist at the period of my return from France, and yet your conduct towards me and your daughter was then precisely such as it is at present. Perhaps I ought to except the tone which you assumed in conversation with Turner respecting me, which, for anything that I learn from you, I know not how favourably he may not have perverted. In my judgment, neither I, nor your daughter, nor her offspring, ought to receive the treatment which we encounter on every side. It has perpetually appeared to me to have been your especial duty to see that, so far as mankind value your good opinion, we were dealt justly by, and that a young family, innocent and benevolent and united, should not be confounded with prostitutes and seducers. My astonishment, and I will confess when I have been treated with most harshness and cruelty by you, my indignation has been extreme, that, knowing as you do my nature, any considerations should have prevailed on you to have been thus harsh and cruel. I lamented also over my ruined hopes, hopes of all that your genius once taught me to expect from your virtue, when I found that for yourself, your family, and your creditors, you would submit to that communication with me which you once rejected and abhorred, and which no pity for my poverty or sufferings, assumed willingly for you, could avail to extort. Do not talk of *forgiveness* again to me, for my blood boils in my veins, and my gall rises against all that bears the human form, when I think of what I, their benefactor and ardent lover, have endured of enmity and contempt from you and from all mankind.

I cannot mix the feelings to which you have given birth with details in answer to your views of my affairs. I can only say that I think you are too sanguine, but that I will do all that I can not to disappoint you. I see much difficulty and some danger, but I [am] in no temper to overrate my own inconveniences. I shall certainly remain

in London some days, perhaps longer, as affairs appear to require. Meanwhile, oblige me by referring to the letter in which I mention Bryant, and enclose me his direction as soon as possible. I have left his letter at Bishopgate. I will take an early opportunity of replying to your letter at length, if no other mode of explanation suggests itself.

[Addressed outside],  
W. GODWIN, Esq.,  
41 Skinner Street,  
Snow Hill.

## 225. TO ROBERT SOUTHEY

Messrs. LONGDILL & Co.,  
5 GRAY'S INN SQUARE, [LONDON],  
March 7, 1816.]

MY DEAR SIR,

I cannot refrain from presenting you with a little poem,<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The little volume was "Alastor; / or, / The Spirit of Solitude: / and other Poems. By / Percy Bysshe Shelley. / London: / Printed for Baldwin, Craddock, and Joy, Pater-noster Row; and Carpenter and Son, / Old Bond-Street: / By S. Hamilton, Weybridge, Surrey. / 1816." The other poems in the volume are the verses (1) "O! there are spirits of the air," supposed to have been addressed to Coleridge; (2) "Stanzas—April, 1814"; (3) "Mutability"; (4) "The pale, the cold, and the moony smile"; (5) "A summer-evening churchyard"; (6) "To Wordsworth"; (7) "Feelings of a Republican on the Fall of Bonaparte"; (8) "Superstition"; (9) "Sonnet. From the Italian of Dante"; (10) "Translated from the Greek of Moschus"; (11) "The Dæmon of the World. A Fragment" from "Queen Mab." In Mrs. Shelley's note on "Alastor" she says "In the summer of 1815, after a tour along the southern coast of Devonshire and a visit to Clifton, he [Shelley] rented a house on Bishopgate Heath, on the borders of Windsor Forest, where he enjoyed several months of comparative health and tranquil happiness. The later summer months were warm and dry. Accompanied by a few friends, he visited the source of the Thames, making the voyage in a wherry from Windsor to Cricklade. His beautiful stanzas (5) in the churchyard at Lechlade were written on that occasion. 'Alastor' was composed on his return. He spent his days under the oak-shades of Windsor Great Park; and the magnificent woodland was a fitting study to inspire the various descriptions of forest scenery we find in the poem." Peacock says that when Shelley was at a loss for a title for his poem, "I proposed



the product of a few serene hours of the last beautiful autumn. I shall never forget the pleasure which I derived from your conversation, or the kindness with which I was received in your hospitable circle during the short period of my stay in Cumberland some years ago. The disappointment of some youthful hopes, and subsequent misfortunes of a heavier nature, are all that I can plead as my excuse for neglecting to write to you, as I had promised from Ireland. The true weight of this apology you cannot know. Let it be sufficient that, regarding you with admiration as a poet, and with respect as a man, I send you, as an intimation of those sentiments, my first serious attempt to interest the best feelings of the human heart, believing that you have so much general charity as to forget, like me, how widely in moral and political opinions we disagree, and to attribute that difference to better motives than the multitude are disposed to allege as the cause of dissent from their institutions.

Very sincerely yours,

PERCY B. SHELLEY.

226. TO WILLIAM GODWIN

(London)

13 NORFOLK STREET, [LONDON],

March 7, 1816.

SIR,

The hopes which I had conceived of receiving from you the treatment and the consideration which I esteem to be justly due to me were destroyed by your letter dated

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that which he adopted. The Greek word *Ἀλάστωρ* is an evil genius, *κακοδαίμων*, though the sense of the two words is somewhat different as in the *Φανείς Ἀλάστωρ ἢ κακὸς δαίμων ποδέν*, of Æschylus. The poem treated the Spirit of Solitude as a spirit of evil. I mention the true meaning of the word, because many have supposed 'Alastor' to be the name of the hero of the poem."

the 5th. The feelings occasioned by this discovery were so bitter and so excruciating that I am resolved for the future to stifle all those expectations which my sanguine temper too readily erects on the slightest relaxation of the contempt and the neglect in the midst of which I live. I must appear the reverse of what I really am, haughty and hard, if I am not to see myself and all that I love trampled upon and outraged. Pardon me, I do entreat you, if, pursued by the conviction that where my true character is most entirely known, I have met with the most systematic injustice, I have expressed myself with violence, overlook a fault caused by your own equivocal politeness, and I will offend no more.

We will confine our communications to business.

I have left a note at Anderton's Coffee House appointing an interview with Bryant. If I have a fair offer on the subject of reversion, there is at once an end to the objections which I should be inclined to make to any other arrangement from the supposition of my father's settling in some manner on the basis of the original proposal.

If Bryant is in earnest I will make Longdill treat with him. Longdill will not consent to treat with him unless his terms approach to reasonableness. I do not scruple to promise you the advance if it can be managed thus.

I have a vital objection to auction, or any enquiries among professed money-lenders. I should suffer more in my negotiation with my father for such measures, which would probably be unsuccessful, than from a fair bargain which might be carried into effect.

The affair with Nash has a tendency the opposite to that which you attributed to it.

It is now in Chancery, though from what fund it is to be paid no one knows, and will infallibly be decided in my favour. It will be decided that he is to receive his capital and five per cent., and no more. This proves that the bond is good property, but that all speculations by which more than five per cent. is to be made (as no one

will advance money without larger profit) will be annulled by the Chancellor.

I entirely agree with you on the subject of raising money on annuity.

I plainly see how necessary immediate advances are to your concerns, and will take care that shall fail in nothing which I can do to procure them.

I shall remain in town at least another week, that I may give every possible attention to this subject. My own concerns are decided, I fear, already.

P. B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],  
W. GODWIN, Esq.,  
41 Skinner Street,  
Snow Hill.

227. TO WILLIAM GODWIN  
(London)

LONDON,  
March 9, 1816.

SIR,

I have made an appointment with Bryant which he has not kept, probably because he has not called at the coffee house yet. I do not regret this neglect as I think, under the circumstances I am about to mention, that a negotiation with him would be safest postponed.

Since Wednesday I have been daily expecting a message from Longdill to require my signature for the answer in Chancery. Not having heard from him I called this morning—the answer was ready. In the progress of conversation I asked Longdill how soon he thought the question would be decided. He replied coldly, he supposed in a month or two, that he scarcely knew the mode which Whitton designed to adopt, but that it ought to be very indifferent to me, since it would certainly be decided that we must not touch the estates. It happened at this period of

the conversation that Whitton came in. His manner and tone on the subject were the very reverse of Longdill's. He blamed Longdill for having neglected to send for me to sign the answer yesterday, which delay he observed would prevent our cause from being heard on Wednesday, the day which he had provided. He seemed to regret that *one day* had been lost, he said that the production of the infant had already procrastinated the proceedings much to the displeasure of Sir Timothy. He expressed on my father's account the greatest anxiety for the approaching decision, and that in a manner that makes me hope that it is possible that Mr. Hart and Butler and Sir T. Romilly should be in the wrong. Whitton expresses much confidence in the expectation that the decision will enable me and my father to divide the whole estates.—It is advisable under these circumstances to suspend all other negotiations. The cause must be heard some day next week.

[Addressed outside],  
W. GODWIN, Esq.,  
41 Skinner Street.  
Snow Hill.

228. TO WILLIAM GODWIN  
(London)

13 NORFOLK STREET, LONDON,

March 16, 1816.

SIR,

Turner has been with you, and he will have informed you that I have been active in the endeavour to raise money. I have seen Dawe, and attempted by every possible inducement to urge him to make the advance. He has not refused, and even has promised that if he can procure any money he would willingly lend it.

I have seen Bryant also, but nothing can be done with him until the question between my father and myself is



disposed of. This cause is to come on and to receive judgment next Tuesday.

[Addressed outside],  
W. GODWIN, Esq.,  
41 Skinner Street,

229. TO WILLIAM GODWIN  
(London)

13 NORFOLK STREET, LONDON,  
March 21, 1816.

SIR,

I have not been unemployed in attempting to raise money, though I fear ineffectually. I have seen Bryant twice, and I fear that nothing favourable will result from my negotiation with him; he has promised, however, to write if he should be able to do anything. My principal hope is Dawe, from whom I think money might be obtained if Turner would undertake to persuade him. Can you suggest any other means than those in which I have engaged?

The decision in Chancery is postponed until to-morrow (Thursday). I shall inform you of the event immediately.

P. B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],  
W. GODWIN, Esq.,  
41 Skinner Street,  
Snow Hill.

230. TO WILLIAM GODWIN  
(London)

[26] MARCHMONT STREET, [LONDON],  
March 29, 1816.

I had a long and most painful conversation with Turner last night on the subject of your pecuniary distress.—I am not, as he, I fear, leaves you to infer, unwilling to do

my utmost, nor does my disposition in the least depend on the question of your demonstrating personal kindness to myself or Mary.—I see that, if anything is to be done, it must be done instantly. You know my habitual, my constitutional inability to deal with monied men. I have no friend who will supply my deficiencies,—none who interest themselves in my own, much less in your concerns, which I have, as much as one man can make those of another, made my own. Can you not yourself see these money-lenders? Hayward's partner was in Chancery yesterday when he heard my title to the reversion admitted to be excellent, and my powers, over that which I pretend to, unimpeached.—Would H[ayward] advance money on *post-obit* bond or deferred annuity? Can you not see him?

I shall be absent from town to-day, to-morrow, and a part of the following day. Fanny can communicate, should anything important occur, with Mary on the subject. Her sentiments in all respects coincide with mine; her interest is perhaps greater; her judgment, from what she knows of our situation, of what ought or can be done, is probably more calm and firm.—

Chancery, as you have heard, has given a doubtful and hesitating opinion. Whatever is to be done for me will be reluctantly done.

P. B. SHELLEY.

[Addressed outside],  
W. GODWIN, Esq.,  
41 Skinner Street,  
Snow Hill.

### 231. To W. BRYANT

26 MARCHMONT STREET,  
BRUNSWICK SQUARE [LONDON],  
April 8, 1816.

DEAR SIR,

I request that if any enquiries are made respecting the

negotiation in which we are at present engaged, you take every possible care to give no information to the enquirer, or allow it to be suspected that any negotiation at all is pending.—My father has been made acquainted with the application for the register of my birth at Warnham, and has been informed of the address to which it was sent. It is of great importance to me, as I am to be saved from additional domestic dissensions, to allow the real fact not to transpire, at least, until the business is concluded.

Your obed[ient] ser[van]t,

P. B. SHELLEY.

I hope speedily to hear from you.

[Addressed outside],

— BRYANT, Esq.,

West Place,

West Square, St. George's Fields.

## 232. TO W. BRYANT

26 MARCHMONT STREET, [LONDON],

April 14, 1815. [? 1816.]

DEAR SIR,

Do not trouble yourself about my interest in the timber—my father can only cut under the restraint of an injunction from Chancery, and is bound by that injunction to bring the money into court to await the decision of the case. You misunderstood me—I only said that Mr. Whitton had informed me that it was not my father's intention to touch the timbers which Dr. Bethune considers ornamental. I was led to interest myself in this by understanding from you that Dr. Bethune would lend me £500. I have indeed the most urgent necessity for the advance of such a sum. Do you think any friends of yours at Worth, do you think Dr. Bethune would lend it to me on my bond at a year or eighteen months? I should assuredly be able to pay it when due, since the affair with my father

would either have gone off altogether, and then I could make a security on the estate, or we should have agreed on terms, and I should be in immediate possession of my share of the reversion. I am in awkward circumstances for want of £500, and if you stand my friend in procuring it for me, you may depend upon my showing myself a friend to you.

Dear Sir,

Your obliged serv't.,

PERCY B. SHELLEY.

W. BRYANT, Esq.,  
Worth Rectory,  
East Grinstead, Sussex.

233. TO W. BRYANT.

26 MARCHMONT STREET,  
BRUNSWICK SQUARE [LONDON],  
April 24, 1816.

DEAR SIR,

In reply to the proposal made by you some months since to me on the part of Dr. Bethune, I wrote the other day to say that I would sell him the reversion at a fair price. In answer to your request as to the nature of the title I can convey (?) accept the following statement. The estates, of which this of Dr. Bethune is a part, are given, by settlements dated August, 1791, to my father for life, to me in remainder. On my father's death by recovery I obtain the fee of these estates. I can make a deed which shall be binding upon myself in case I survive my father, and which shall be binding upon my infant son if I do not survive my father, either to alienate any particular estate, or to pay a certain sum of money. I have levied a fine and acquired this power, which I believe is called a *base fee*, which as I have before stated I am fully competent to convey. If I and my infant son should die before my father the security falls to the ground. But Dr. B. or any person might insure my life against my father's to whatever amount he should be beneficially interested. He need



sustain no *loss in any case*; and would only fail in his object of obtaining possession of the farm in question, if, what is very improbable, my father should survive not only me, but both myself and my infant son.

Dear Sir,

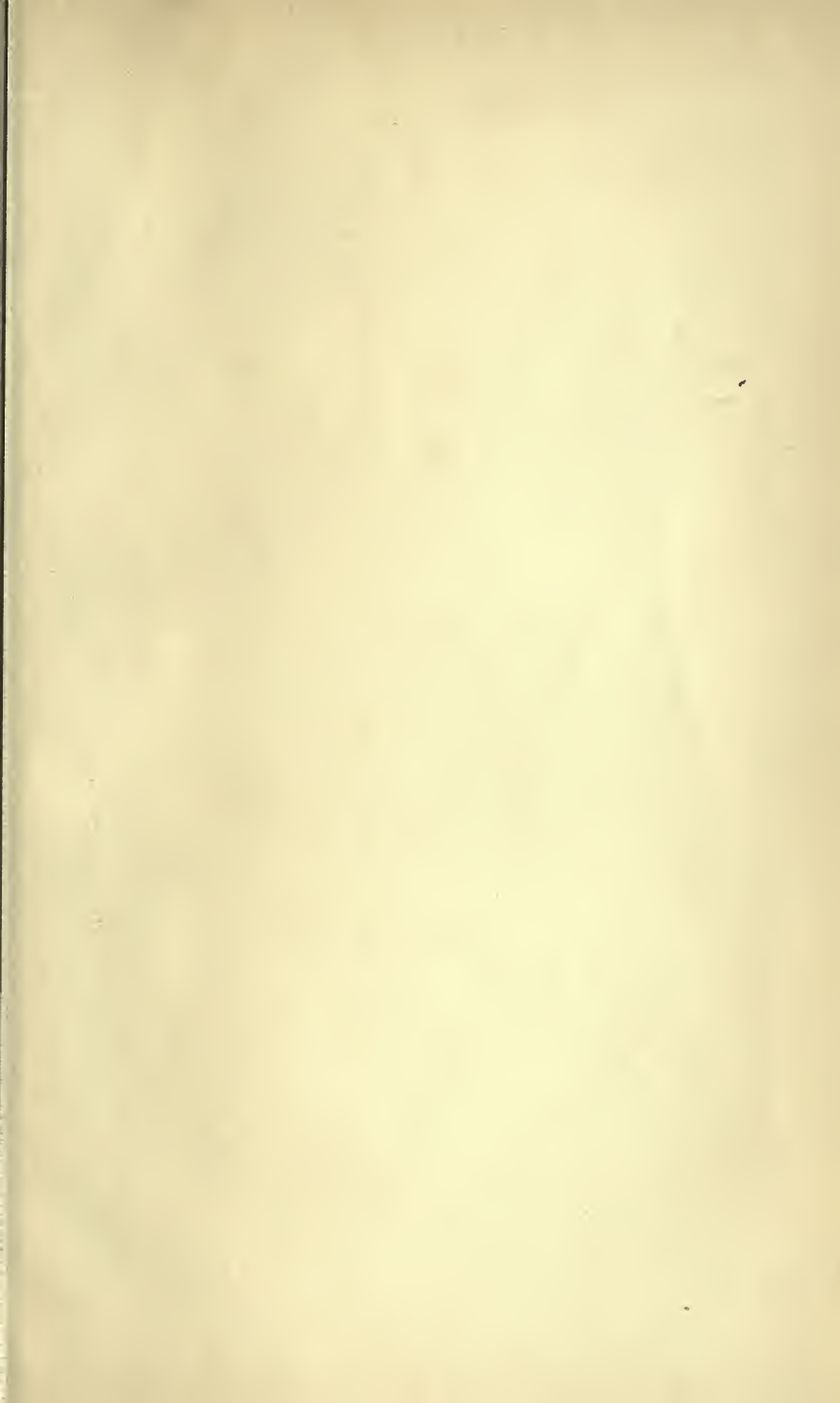
Your very obedient servant,

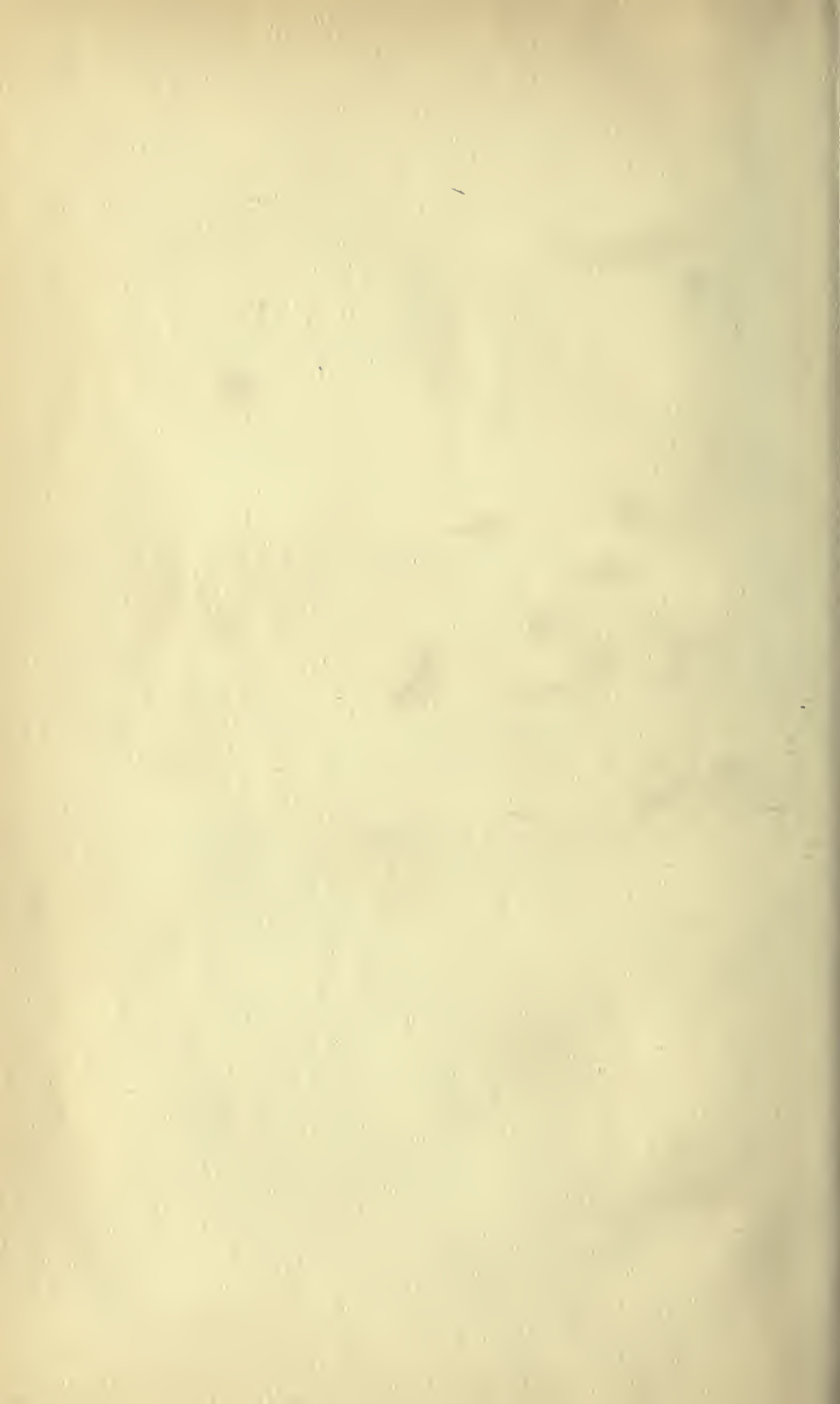
PERCY B. SHELLEY.

[END OF VOL. I]

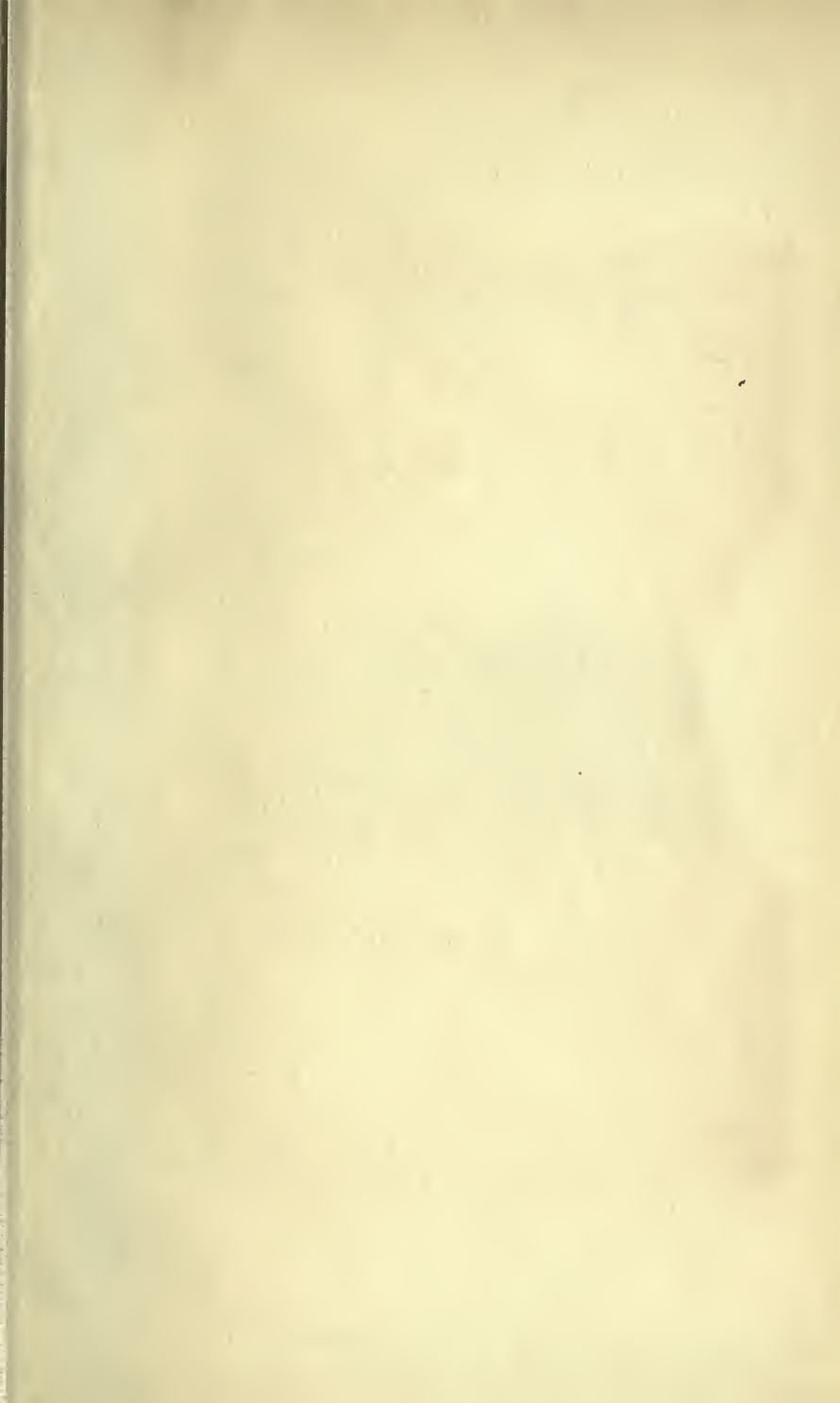
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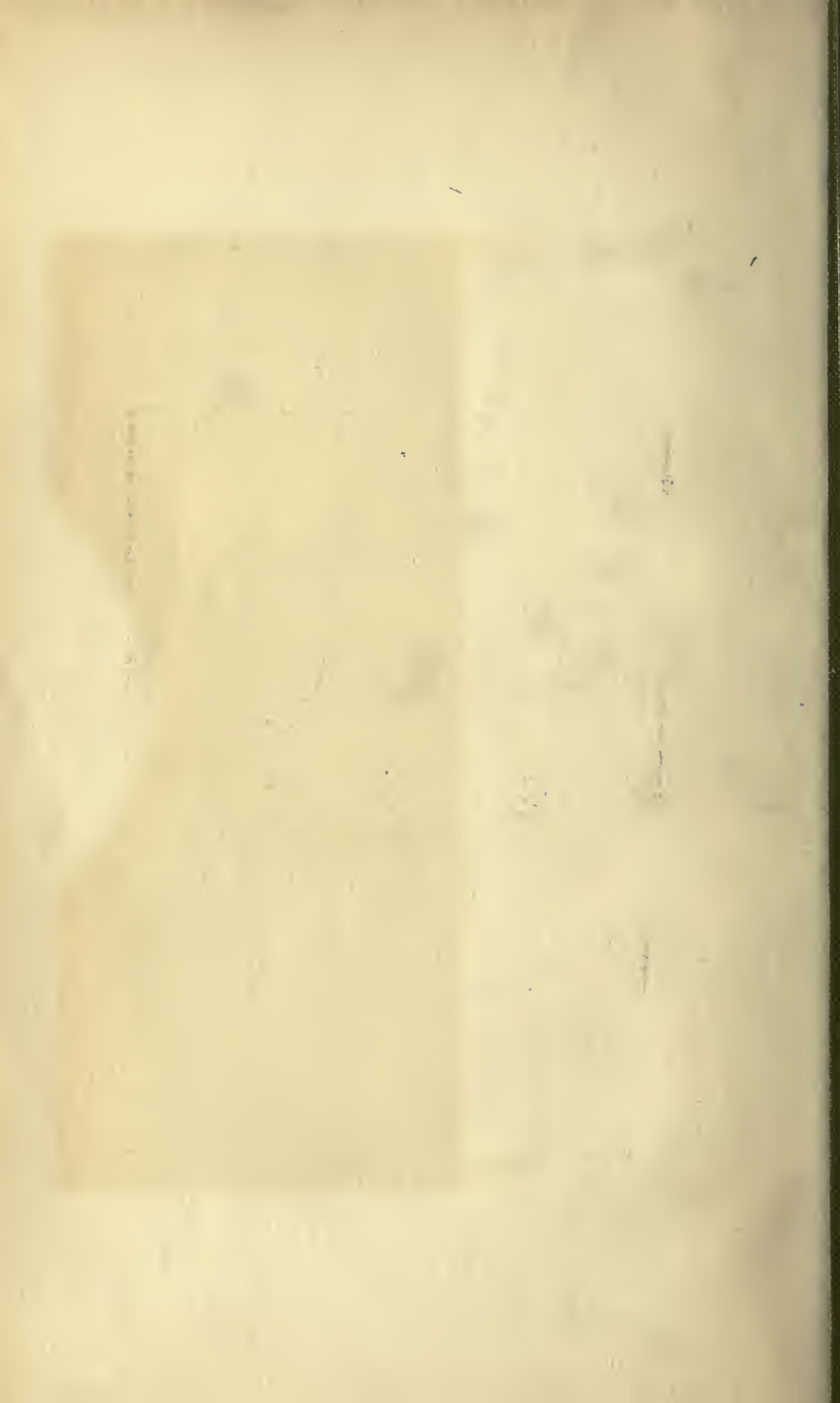












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Shelley, Percy Bysshe  
Letters

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